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SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

I.

DURING my recent visit to New York and Boston, in April, 1861, I made the personal acquaintance of some of the leading Spiritualists and best known Mediums of those cities; and at the request of several of the most prominent supporters of and contributors to the *Spiritual Magazine*, to whom I have read my notes since my return to London, I have great pleasure in placing them before its readers. I trust that my narrative may not only prove interesting, but that it will be instructive, inasmuch as it will convey additional proof of the reality of spirit-intercourse, confirmed by my own experiences in America, where I witnessed some of the most remarkable phenomena in Spiritualism ever recorded.

In my family and immediate circle of friends, for whom alone I kept a journal of my travels, I know that every statement I make is implicitly believed; but I am afraid that even among Spiritualists, it may be supposed in one or two cases to which I shall refer, that I may *somehow* have been deceived, and of course among the masses, who are still ignorant of the spiritual facts which are transpiring in their midst, my statements will be considered to be the ravings of a disordered imagination, or a gross attempt to impose on their credulity, senseless and profitless as such a proceeding would be; and therefore, it may not be out of place to remind these sceptics of an old story which I hope those who are familiar with will forgive me for repeating. It is this:—

A Dutch ambassador assured the King of Siam that in Holland the water at times became so hard that a troop of elephants might walk on it in safety. The King is said to have replied: "Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me because I looked upon you as a sober fair-minded man, but now I am sure you lie."

The multitude, who from want of opportunity or inclination, have never seen the marvellous phenomena which are now attested by thousands in this country, and by tens of thousands in America, are exactly in the position of the benighted King of Siam. The *facts* simply transcend *their* philosophy, and with an arrogance which their sober reasoning cannot justify, they coolly ignore human testimony and declare them to be "impossible" and untrue.

It is not my intention, however, to discuss the general subject, which is so ably handled by other contributors to the *Spiritual Magazine*, but only to warn the self-satisfied sceptic that before he can hope to influence the minds of serious honest men by sneering at statements which to his limited comprehension appear too extravagant for belief, he must first put himself on the same plane with me and others by investigating the subject with the sole object of eliciting the truth; and then, assuredly, the *reality of the phenomena* will no longer be denied by him, whatever differences of opinion the study of them may conscientiously lead us to.

My own belief in spiritual appearances, and that apparitions of departed persons are occasionally seen, has been long settled, and it is strengthened by the fact expressed in four lines of Byron:—

I merely mean to say what Johnson said,
That in the course of some six thousand years,
All nations have believed that from the dead
A visitant at intervals appears.

On my passage to America I took an early opportunity of introducing the subject among the passengers, and in a day or two it was evident that my advocacy of the truth of Spiritualism had become generally known, as I was sought for and constantly surrounded by groups representing every type of scepticism. Dr. Mack, a highly respected and well-known physician, residing at St. Catherine's, Upper Canada, placed himself in the van, and contested my arguments very warmly. It was, however, but a repetition of the old worn-out story: my facts were not facts to him—he must see them first—he must examine all the surrounding conditions—there must be something wrong in my powers of observation, &c., &c. To most persons, the *facts*, at first, are a sad stumbling-block, and drive them to a setting up of their own judgment as superior to that of all who have become believers after due investigation. Judging from a variety of small civilities which were tendered to me on board, I had reason to think my unpopular views had nevertheless met with many sympathisers, and, among them, the very last person to whom I should have thought of speaking of Spiritualism from my previous knowledge of the man,—the captain of the ship. He however, I

found, had had his own experiences, as explained by the following colloquy which was overheard and reported to me:—

One of the passengers, a friend of the captain's, smoking with him on deck at night, said: "Have you heard all this d—d nonsense they are talking about spirits?"—"Yes," said the captain, in his solemn deep-toned voice, "I have; and let me tell you, Joe, there is more in it than people have any idea of." "Why, you don't mean to say that you believe the things of which Mr. Coleman is talking?"—"Well, Joe, I can only tell you that I had the clearest intimation of poor D——'s death, and in this way"—and the captain proceeded to tell his friend a veritable ghost story, which I have reason to believe made a serious impression on "Joe," inasmuch as he too exhibited to me afterwards many special civilities, showing a change of feeling in my favour. Among the officers of the ship who took the most interest in the subject were the doctor and the purser, who frequently invited me to their private cabins, and were serious and anxious in their enquiries. One evening, the purser said, "Doctor, do you believe in spiritual appearances?" "Yes," he replied, "I am inclined to do so—I never heard before on personal testimony of such facts as Mr. Coleman relates, but I believe them." "Well," said the purser, "so do I; and I will tell you why"—and he told the following story:—

"When C—— took a house, I went to live with him. One night I was disturbed by a loud knocking at the head of my bed, which destroyed my rest. I named it in the morning, and was laughed at by C—— and his sisters. This occurred a second and third time, with the addition of the bed clothes being on one occasion slowly dragged away from me. On a subsequent night, returning home late, I was groping my way in the dark to my bedroom, when at the door I was astounded by hearing a tremendous smash, as if a hundred weight of glass and china had been thrown at my feet. It was heard by all the house: C——, his sisters, and the servants rushed out of their rooms in great alarm; lights were procured, when to our surprise not anything was to be seen, and nothing was found to account for this extraordinary disturbance. The result was, that C—— gave notice of his intention to leave the house, and at length ascertained that the former occupant had packed up everything and decamped in the night; and the landlord on cleaning out the cellars found the body of a woman buried under the coals—who it was supposed had been murdered."

On my arrival at New York I made the personal acquaintance of Judge Edmonds, for whom I had long entertained the most profound admiration and respect. The undaunted manner in which from the first moment of his conviction he has proclaimed the truth, and the worldly sacrifices he has been compelled in

consequence to make in the cause of Spiritualism, entitle him to the affectionate regard of all men, without reference to those differences of religious opinion, which we too often stop to question and to quarrel with. I was surprised to find that the community who had forced Judge Edmonds from his high office, the duties of which it is admitted even by his persecutors he had discharged with fearless dignity, now pay him on all hands the most marked respect. I had an opportunity of observing this in two courts in which he was professionally engaged as counsel, and also in walking with him through the streets; and I was especially struck with the ease and masterly superiority which he exhibited over his opponent in conducting his legal arguments. He is called by his title by all around him, including the judge on the bench. I spent the evening at Judge Edmonds' house, and was introduced to his daughter, Miss Laura Edmonds, his sole companion. Both are genial and very cheerful, interesting persons. Miss Edmonds' health is very delicate, and for that reason the exercise of her very remarkable mediumship is not now encouraged. Her gifts are very various: she is a writing medium; and the spirits speak through her in the trance state; she sees spirits in her normal condition; and she can sometimes at will *project her spirit*; appearing in form, and delivering messages to friends in sympathy with her, even though living at a distance; and she cited two or three instances in proof of this. The power of the spirit to leave the natural body, and to present itself in visible form and identity to another, though rare, is not an attribute of Miss Edmonds' mediumship only; as I am acquainted with a lady resident in London who has the same power, and who has exercised it several times. This lady told me that on one occasion having a young friend staying on a visit with her, a gentleman who called to see them, in the course of conversation ridiculed the belief in apparitions, and said that he would give anything to see a ghost. He laughed at her assertion that her spirit could appear to him that very night if she pleased, and dared her to try it, which she agreed to do. In the course of the night, she told her friend that she had been to Mr. —'s bedside, and that finding him asleep, she awoke him by a box on his ear; and then, after repeating to him a verse from a poem of Keats's, came away. The gentleman called on the ladies early on the following morning, corroborated her statement, and acknowledged himself perforce a convert to at all events that phase of spiritual manifestations.

Miss Edmonds described to me a visit made to her by a lady who was an entire stranger to her, and who wished for a communication. Laura's hand was moved to write, but was prevented by the seizure of it by her left hand, which tried in a very decided manner to interrupt the spirit controlling the right hand. The

medium then gave utterance to a half-expressed sentence, which was in like manner checked by the second spirit; she then saw both spirits standing before her, and told her visitor that one was her husband and the other her father; and that by their interference with one another, she was made to write and talk so incongruously that she could make nothing of it; and she feared it would be very unsatisfactory. The lady, however, said the whole was most satisfactory to her as a test of the reality of the spirits' presence, as the same habits were exhibited in their lives: there had been a constant war of sentiment between her father and husband; whatever one asserted the other invariably contradicted.

I paid a visit to Mr. Colchester, who is what is called a "test medium." He obtains striking and very peculiar manifestations. Taking my seat in his private room with him alone, he placed before me slips of paper and requested me to write any number of questions I pleased. Whilst I was so engaged, he begged me to excuse him, and he went to speak to a person waiting in another room. On his return I had written out ten questions, each of which I had folded up closely and separately. He took them one by one before him and rapidly wrote out an answer to each question.

I may here explain that I have but three near relatives in the spirit-world—*viz.*: my father, whose name was Sylvester, my step-daughter Isabel, and my step-son Harry—these names I had written, with others, on separate pieces and rolled them up in small pellets. On opening the papers I found that each answer was appropriate and exact, and proved conclusively that either by a natural clairvoyance on the part of the medium, who appeared to be in his normal condition the whole time, or by a spiritual impression, he had read every word contained in each of the folded papers. Take for instance the following questions and answers:—

Q.—"Is Harry or Isabel with me, and can they prove to me their presence?"

A.—"Yes; we are often with you. It is our greatest wish to speak to you alone," &c., &c. (Signed, "Isabella. Henry." I had written them Isabel and Harry).

Q.—"Has my visit to this country any special significance?—Will it be of service to me or to any one else?"

A.—"You are on a special mission, which will not only benefit you, but be of considerable benefit to others. You will be very successful," &c.

I then asked what spirit had given me the answer to number nine. Mr. Colchester quickly unbuttoned the sleeve of his shirt, and stripping it up, showed me the name "Isabella" plainly imprinted on his arm in red letters about an inch long, slightly.

raised. I tried, at his request, to rub them off, but the friction only tended to bring out the writing in stronger relief. In like manner, the first having faded away, the name "Sylvester" was afterwards shown on his arm; and in reply to other questions, the words "Yes," and "No," appeared successively on the palm of his hand. Mr. Colchester then requested me to take the pellets containing the names I had written, and to throw them, together with my pocket handkerchief, under the table, and to select at the same time one of the names. I said "Isabel;" and in an instant he said, you will find the name tied in the corner of your handkerchief. I took it from the floor, where I had myself placed it a moment before, and found the pellet, with the name Isabel tied, as he said it was, in the corner of my own handkerchief.

Querulous sceptics may save themselves the trouble of speculating on whether or not I may have been deceived by a sleight-of-hand trick. There was no trick in the case. It was broad daylight, and no possibility of deception.

On a second visit to Mr. Colchester, I took with me a sealed envelope, enclosing a folded paper on which I had written, "Will the spirit be so good as to give me the exact words of this paper, merely to satisfy me of its power to do so?—B. C." I laid the envelope on the table. Mr. Colchester did not touch it; but, taking a pencil and paper, he wrote rapidly *every word contained in it*. This was a conclusive test of that clairvoyant power which has been so frequently disputed, and which Sir Philip Crampton, M. D., challenged some years ago, when he said he had enclosed a hundred pound note in an envelope "to be given to any one who, by the operation of Mesmerism, shall describe the particulars of the note." It was never claimed, and it is therefore constantly cited as a proof that Clairvoyance is a fraud. In reference to this particular test, I find the following statement made in the 37th number of the *Zoist*, April, 1852:—"After all, it turns out that Sir Philip Crampton did not enclose a bank note, but a blank cheque; and they say he thought it good fun to substitute the one for the other." The fraud in this instance would thus appear to have been practised by the learned physician, and this is the way that men of science pretend to investigate and too frequently trifle with subjects which they know, if proved, would overturn their philosophy. If, however, there should be any *savant* in the present day who is bold enough to risk a hundred pound note on Mr. Colchester's ability, *without* the apparent aid of what is called Mesmerism, to decipher the contents of a sealed envelope, I shall be glad to be the "medium" of making the trial, and I am much mistaken, after my experience, if the sceptic is not made to pay for his temerity. The very remarkable manifestation of writing on the flesh is also obtained by Mr.

Foster, of New York, who was absent at the time of my visit from the city. I am told he is a respectable young man, and that his manifestations are quite equal to Mr. Colchester's, and much of the same character.

Dr. Gardner and Dr. Bell, of Boston, attest their having witnessed about two years ago similar manifestations through the mediumship of Miss Coggsweil, of Vermont. Dr. Gardner asked mentally for some evidence that his brother in the spirit-world was present, and the letters M. G., the initials of the name, came up on the arm of the medium. Dr. Gardner then asked mentally—"How did he die?" and presently there rose up on her arm the figure of a human heart, and over it another figure of a pistol being discharged into the heart. This was a satisfactory test to Dr. Gardner, as his brother was shot through the heart by a ball from a revolver. Dr. Gardner sent for Dr. L. V. Bell, a well-known physician, who is not a Spiritualist, to witness this extraordinary phenomenon, and, in answer to a mentally-expressed desire of Dr. Bell, three crosses and a flower came up on the medium's arm. Dr. Bell, in reference to this and other phenomena which he witnessed, says he does not believe they are the work of spirits. He is equally sure they are not produced by imposture,—they come, in his opinion, "from some occult cause which I do not undertake to explain," &c. "But he says so far as I am qualified to appreciate or observe what occurs before my eyes, I cannot admit that there was juggling or self-deception in the matter."

Among the most valuable developments of Spiritualism in America is the number of healing mediums, many of high character and station, and whose apparently miraculous cures are attested by a host of reliable witnesses; and there is no more reason to doubt that spirit-power is exercised for the cure of disease, than in any other of the marvellous manifestations which many of the readers of this Magazine have frequently witnessed. I met a Mr. Hussey in New York, who is a healing medium. He described to me how strangely, despite of himself, and even against his wishes, he had been forced to relinquish other pursuits, and to devote himself to the healing art. He said he had cured almost every known disease, except yellow fever. One case of typhoid he cured in half an hour; another of spinal complaint confirmed by years of suffering, which had baffled all other treatment, he had cured in nineteen days. He confessed to me that he knew nothing of pathology; that he exercised no thought, but that without volition on his part, his hands were directed to the seat of disease, and its cure thereby effected.

In Boston, Dr. Newton has obtained great celebrity as a healing medium. I had not time to visit him, but I heard from a friend

who knew him well, and who frequently visits his house, that his powers are acknowledged on all hands. In one case known to my informant, a man, who had lost his sight for 15 years, was restored in one hour, and I was told that a pile of crutches is to be seen at Dr. Newton's house, bearing the names of the patients to whom they belonged, who had been cured "by the laying on of hands," and who had walked away without further use for them.

At New York, I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Miss Catherine Fox, who is now well known wherever Spiritualism has been heard of, as one of the Fox family through whom the modern manifestations were first recognised in America, 13 years ago. She is still young, and a very interesting, amiable and lady-like person. Her mediumship is as strong now as it has ever been; and indeed she had, during my stay in New York, some of the most remarkable manifestations that have ever been recorded, and of which I shall give a full account in a subsequent number. The rappings in her presence are very loud and precise. When I called on her one morning, the room resounded on all sides as if a host were giving me a joyous welcome. I asked if the spirits who were present would give me their names, and the names of Harry, Isabel, and Sylvester were spelt out, no names having been mentioned by me in Miss Fox's presence, and of course, I and my family being wholly unknown to her. These were followed by other names of friends, spelt out in full, and one, a relative of my wife's said, "Let me speak." A message followed, of a specially significant and touching character, which I am precluded from giving, as it relates to private family affairs; but I may mention that the tenor of the message is an actual apology offered for an injustice done to me during her life-time, now 20 years ago.

Dr. Kirby, a well-known physician residing in New York, told me that he had investigated Spiritualism for some years, and that he was a confirmed believer. Among many facts which he named, I select the following curious proof of spirit-power:—He and his friend Dr. Wilson were at a *séance*, when a spirit gave his name William Nixon. "What?" said Dr. Wilson, "are you my old friend with whom I have played so many games at cards?" "Yes" was the reply; "I can play now as well as I ever did, and I challenge you to a game." A pack of cards was obtained and handed under the table, where a naturally-shaped though not a fleshly hand, cut them. Dr. Wilson then dealt five cards to each, and proceeded to play an American game, called *euchre*, receiving from the spirit card for card throughout the game, which was won by the spirit, who said exultingly, "You see, Doctor, I had the advantage, as I could see every card in your hand."

Mr. Hussey, of whom I have made mention, related to me an equally curious manifestation which occurred recently at a sitting where he was present. A spirit requested that a tumbler filled with water should be placed in the centre of the table around which they were seated; they were then told to put out the light, which was done, each one of the party holding the other's hand. In a minute, the gas was re-lighted, when the tumbler was found to be entirely emptied of its contents. The spirit next requested the room to be made dark, and on re-lighting it in an instant after, it was found that the glass had been refilled to the brim. They asked the spirit to explain the process, and were told that a hand was formed large enough to hold in its hollow the contents of the glass, by pressing it up against the lower surface of the table, which on looking was found to be wet.

These are some of the incidents which so frequently occur in the experience of those engaged in the prosecution of this subject; and which prove with irresistible force the reality of some super-mundane agency.

SELECT READINGS ON SPIRITUAL THEMES.

PRAYER.

Prayer: What is it?

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,
Utter'd, or unexpressed:
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye
When none but God is near."

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

"Prayer, the Church's banquet, Angel's age,
God's breath in man returning to his birth,
The soul in paraphrase, heart in pilgrimage,
The Christian plummet sounding heaven and earth."

GEORGE HERBERT.

Unuttered Prayer.

"If prayer be the communion of the soul with God, it is but a little part of it that can be uttered in words; and still less that

will take form of words in the presence of others. Of outward wants of outward things, of one's purely earthly estate, we can speak freely. But of the soul's inward life—of its struggles with itself, its hopes, yearnings, griefs, loves, joys, of its very personality, it is reserved to such a degree that there can be no prayer expressive of the inward life, until we have entered into the closet and shut to the door. Every Christian whose life has developed itself into great experience of secret prayer, knows that the hidden things of the closet transcend all uttered prayer as much in depth, richness, and power, as they do in volume and space."—H. W. BEECHER.

Prayer, a Relief to the Heart in Time of Suffering.

"Oh! when the heart is full—when bitter thoughts
Come crowding thickly up for utterance,
And the poor common words of courtesy
Are such a mockery—how much
The bursting heart may pour itself in prayer!"—WILLIAM

The Dynamics of Prayer.

Prayer is first an acknowledgment of weakness or dependence, which is in itself a force, for it has within it that same true force of attraction which a vacuum has in nature. . . . The soul feels its weakness, and holds out its cup to be replenished. These deep longings and yearnings of the soul are the electric chain that guides it to the loving power of God, and brings down by very contact the return current of the holy fire. This is the union with a strength which is not our own, and to feel this high need is the act of prayer. Every act of life may and should be thus a prayer to God; and it has been well said, that "a good man's life is no mean prayer," for it is a continual aspiration of his soul toward the highest. . . . Prayer is the conjunction of the soul with Heaven, and to be joined with Heaven, the soul must be in a state to receive it, and to be assimilated with it. . . . Each man's prayer is his individual conjunction. He is not always able to go into the inner courts of the tabernacle, to the mercy-seat, and there to receive the communings from above, from between the cherubim. Nevertheless, it is there that the communing or communion must be; it is there that he is to be carried before he can feel the perfect prayer. Not, then, a prayer that is said, but one that is felt, the result and intuition of the place and state in which the soul there finds itself. These are the rapt moments of a life, which, once felt, can never be effaced."

W. M. WILKINSON.

“ But thou,
 If thou shouldst never see my face again,
 Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
 Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
 Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
 For what are men better than sheep or goats
 That nourish a blind life within the brain,
 If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
 Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
 For so the whole round earth is every way
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.”

TENNYSON.

The Efficacy of Prayer consistent with the uniformity of Nature.

“ We unreservedly grant the uniformity of visible nature ; and now let us compute how much, or how little, it amounts to. Grant of all our progressions, that, as far as our eye can carry us, they are invariable ; and then let us only reflect how short a way we can trace any of them upwards. In speculating on the origin of an event, we may be able to assign the one which immediately preceded, and term it the proximate cause ; or even ascend by two or three footsteps, till we have discovered some anterior event which we term the remote cause. But how soon do we arrive at the limit of possible investigation, beyond which if we attempt to go we lose ourselves among the depths and the obscurities of a region that is unknown ? Observation may conduct us a certain length backwards in the train of causes and effects ; but, after having done its uttermost, we feel that, above and beyond its loftiest place of ascent, there are still higher steps in the train, which we vainly try to reach, and find them inaccessible. It is even so throughout all philosophy. After having arrived at the remotest cause which man can reach his way to, we shall ever find there are higher and remoter causes still, which distance all his powers of research, and so will ever remain in deepest concealment from his view. Of this higher part of the train he has no observation. Of these remoter causes, and their mode of succession, he can positively say nothing. For aught he knows, *they may be under the immediate control of higher beings in the universe ;** or, like the upper part of a chain, a few

* In a subsequent passage, Dr. Chalmers again appears to recognise among “ the depths and mysteries of an unknown region ” in “ the pathway of sensation ” the agency of subordinate spiritual intelligences, as a divinely appointed means of answer to prayer. He remarks :—“ The things which are done in the higher have an overruling influence, *by lines of transmission*, on all that happens in the lower—yet without one breach or interruption to the uniformity of visible nature. Whatever is done in the transcendental regions—be it by the influence of prayer ; by the immediate finger of God ; *by the ministry of angels*——”

of whose closing links are all that is visible to us, they may be directly appended to the throne, and at all times subject to the instant pleasure of a prayer-hearing God. And it may be by a responsive touch at the higher, and not at the lower part of the progression, that he answers our prayers. It may be not by an act of intervention among those near and visible causes, where intervention would be a miracle; it may be by an unseen but not less effectual act of intervention, among the remote and therefore the occult causes, that He adapts Himself to the various wants, and meets the various petitions of His children. If it be in the latter way that He conducts the affairs of His daily government—then may He rule by a providence as special, as are the needs and the occasions of His family; and, with an ear open to every cry, might He provide for all and administer to all, without one infringement on the uniformity of visible nature. If the responsive touch be given at the lower part of the chain, then the answer to prayer is by miracle, or by a contravention to some of the known sequences of nature. But, if the responsive touch be given at a sufficiently higher part of the chain, then the answer is as effectually made, but not by a miracle, and without violence to any one succession of history or nature which philosophy has ascertained—because the re-action to the prayer strikes at a place that is higher than the highest investigations of philosophy. It is not by a visible movement within the region of human observation, but by an invisible movement in the transcendental region above it, that the prayer is met and responded to. The Supernal Power of the Universe, the mighty and unseen Being who sits aloft, and has been significantly styled the Cause of causes—He, in immediate contact with the upper extremities of every progression, there puts forth an over-ruling influence which tells and propagates downwards to the lower extremities; and so, by an agency placed too remote either for the eye of sense or for all the instruments of science to discover, may God, in answer to prayer, fix and determine every series of events—of which nevertheless all that man can see is but the uniformity of the closing footsteps—a few of the last causes and effects following each other in their wonted order. It is thus that we reconcile all the experience which man has of nature's uniformity, with the effect and significance of his prayers to the God of nature. It is thus that, at one and the same time, do we live under the care of a presiding God, and among the regularities of a harmonious universe.

DR. CHALMERS.

“It is not truth nor philosophy to say that prayer alters

nothing, that the laws of nature are fixed, and that entreaty cannot change them. The laws of nature *are fixed on purpose to be used for the granting of prayer.* Any man can use the laws of nature to grant the requests of his child. Does he say that God, who made those laws, cannot do as much with them as *he* can?"—H. W. BEECHER.

The Best Preparation for Prayer.

"Prayer is the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection, the seat of meditation, the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest; prayer is the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts, it is the daughter of charity, and the sister of meekness; and he that prays to God with an angry, that is, with a troubled and discomposed spirit, is like him that retires into a battle to meditate, and sets up his closet in the out-quarters of an army, and chooses a frontier garison to be wise in. Anger is a perfect alienation of the mind from prayer, and therefore is contrary to that attention which presents our prayers in a right line to God. For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven, and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and motion from an angel as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below; so is the prayer of a good man; when his affairs have required business, and his business was matter of discipline, and his discipline was to pass upon a sinning person, or had a design of charity, his duty met with the infirmities of a man, and anger was its instrument, and the instrument became stronger than the prime agent, and raised a tempest, and overruled the man; and then his prayer was broken, and his thoughts were troubled, and his words went up towards a cloud, and his thoughts pulled them back again, and made them without intention, and the good man sighs for his infirmity, but must be content to lose the prayer, and he must recover it when his anger is removed, and his spirit is becalmed, made even as the brow of Jesus, and smooth like the heart of God; and then it ascends to heaven upon the wings of the holy dove, and dwells with God, till it returns, like the useful bee, loaden with a blessing and the dew of heaven."

JEREMY TAYLOR.

"He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."—COLERIDGE.

Prayer, to be Effectual, must come from the Heart.

"My words fly up, my thoughts remain below;
Words without thoughts never to heaven go."

SHAKESPEARE.

Be Truthful in Prayer.

"Never lie in your prayers: never confess more than you really believe; never promise more than you mean to perform."

JEREMY TAYLOR

The Sum of all True Prayer.

"THY WILL BE DONE."

T. S.

PERPLEXING EXPERIENCES.

By A. E. NEWTON.

A CORRESPONDENT living in a remote section of the country, where Spiritualism is little known, has recently become a writing medium; and having no one at hand from whom to seek counsel, applies for advice. He says:—

I have good times in a morning—up by three, four, five or six, a.m., and have a pleasant pen-and-ink or pencil chat with my relatives, or some spirit they bring. . . . I have a large number of relatives in the spirit-land, parents as well and I allow no spirit to commune but by their introduction—they giving me name, purpose, etc. . . . I feel myself unable to say all the laudatory things some of the spirits say of me, for I know they are not strictly true; and I am anxious to know if, with this arrangement, a spirit could come and give a false name. I have undoubted faith and trust in all my relatives.

Among the spirits thus introduced are those claiming to be Daniel Webster, Macaulay, Douglas Jerrold, and the Apostle Paul, "about whom," our friend says, "I had a controversy with my mother as to its being he, and I dare not doubt her word," &c., &c. "I feel you will say just what you think as to whether all this is truth or deception."

It is not easy to give a positive opinion in such a case. This friend's experience is not peculiar. Most mediums have that which is equivalent to it at the commencement of their medium-

ship. It is often difficult to believe that the spirits whose names are given are the real communicators ; and yet one is loth to conclude that any beings will be allowed to amuse themselves at the expense of honest and trusting mortals, by practising such cruel deceptions, and trifling with the holiest affections of our human nature. But the experience of almost every medium presents much that looks like this. And it must be said that the common forms of mediumship, such as writing, rapping, entrancement, spirit-vision, &c., furnish no security against such deceptions. The "tests" commonly applied, to determine the identity of communicating spirits, such as names, signals, knowledge of facts, &c., are no tests at all to a discriminating mind. Any intelligence possessing the power of reading human minds, or imitating personal peculiarities, could readily give proofs of this kind. No tests are of any worth, except those of a *moral* character. There are some persons gifted with the power of "discerning spirits"—of intuitively penetrating through all disguises, and perceiving the real characters and motives of those who approach them, whether in or out of the body. But this gift is rare, especially among those who are in the earlier stages of spiritual development. It is attained usually through severe experience. The next best substitute for it is to carefully watch the general moral tendencies and results of spirit influence and teachings over our own minds and hearts. Are they for good, or for evil? To determine this fairly, often requires much time and experience, as well as enlightened views of what is good and evil.

It is a common, nay, almost universal thing, for communicating spirits to indulge largely at the outset, in laudation and flattery—to endeavour to excite large expectations of future greatness and distinction on the part of mediums and others, whose development they have taken in hand. If the secret history of modern Spiritualistic experience is ever written, it will disclose a mass of extravagant promises and persuasions most astounding to the uninitiated world. What numbers of excellent and otherwise sensible men have been led each to believe himself the one chosen and ordained Head and Generalissimo of the world's reorganization—the sole Prophet and mouth-piece of Heaven on this planet—the "Coming Man" for whose advent the nations are waiting! How many have been designated for Presidents, Kings, Emperors, in the new regime! What numbers were to be fathers or mothers of new-born Messiahs, who were to eclipse the Man of Nazareth, as the sun eclipses the Morning Star! What multitudes were to be made prodigies in oratory, music, art, science, healing, &c., or to become possessors of untold wealth!

Some, in view of these things, have been ready to pronounce the whole movement evidently "the work of Satan"—or, at best, of mischievous and seducing spirits, seeking only to annoy and delude their victims. Whatever part such beings may play in these temptations, there are other views of this common experience, which are worth considering.

First, such temptations to inflation are not peculiar to modern Spiritualism. They have been common, in one form or another, to persons of marked spiritual experience, probably in all times. Christ is said to have been "led up by the devil into an exceeding high mountain," and offered "all the kingdoms of the world;" and these temptations are represented as a part of His preparation for the work on which he was about to enter.

Doubtless such tests need to be presented, in order to determine our internal conditions. Some persons can withstand them, and say at once, "Get thee behind me, Satan," as Jesus is said to have done; others are weak, and yield. The former may be prepared to enter at once on an effective mission of redemption to others; the latter must have further discipline, before they are worth anything for such a work. And our vanity or self-conceit is not the only weak point that is assailed in these temptations. In fact, every passion and appetite must be subjected to the severest tests, ere we can have any well-grounded confidence in our strength. It is evident, then, that the beings who are the immediate actors in these temptations, are doing a very important work *for us*, whatever may be *their* character or motives. Very likely, mischievous and wicked spirits, both in and out of the body, may be the permitted agents in some part of this work; but if so, they are doubtless overruled by higher powers, and can do us no harm, except we yield to their flatteries and enticements. If we firmly resist, the tempters will flee from us; but if we allow ourselves to become puffed up with conceit, to put on airs, and attempt to assume superiority over others,—to make bread of stones, turn summersaults from the pinnacles of temples, or any other like thing—we may expect to be humiliated in an equal degree as the result. We probably need just such a schooling, to take our conceit out of us.

Such, I think, is a rational view of the design and use of much of this sort of experience. We often think we are testing the spirits, when in fact they are testing us. Their promises or prophecies are usually given in ambiguous or figurative language. Like Macbeth's witches, and Hebrew seers, and the "oracles" of all times, they

———"palter in a double sense,"

leaving us to interpret according to our states and wishes—thus disclosing our real characters.

But even this view does not cover the whole ground. I feel that I should do injustice to some sincere yet sorely tried souls, did I not recognise still another phase and use of such discipline. There are those who have renounced self, and whose deepest prayer is for truth and usefulness, who have yet been led by unseen guardians through what have seemed to others (and often to themselves) strange and purposeless illusions. Elevated at times into the seventh heaven of bliss and angelic communion, they have felt unspeakable joy in the near prospect of being able to confer immense benefits on their kind; and anon they find themselves plunged in the lowest depths of gloom, disappointment and despair—seemingly deserted of all helpers, human or angelic, and impelled even to cry, “My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?” Should our correspondent find himself in just this case, one of these days, he should not imagine that he is an exception.

Can there be any *use* in such experiences? Let us see.

One prime object of a wise and special guardianship over us would seem to be the promotion of our individual *growth*. Especially if we are to be, as we are wont to hope, called to perform any signal service in the general re-construction which must follow the present period of dissolution, we need to have our conceptions and all our capacities greatly expanded. How can this be done? One method surely is, by awakening in us large conceptions of our possibilities, and stimulating our ambition to realise them. Every teacher of youth knows the value of this process. Without it there is no rapid progress, and no great attainment.

The mind, it should be remembered, is a real organic substance, which, under appropriate influences, and at certain seasons, may be made plastic and pliable. Then, it may be *stretched*, or its capacities enlarged, to the dimensions of a grand ideal, which, at another time, could not be taken in. Once thus expanded as to its capabilities, it may require years or centuries of patient growth to fill up this grand ideal with the stamina and fibre necessary to realise their possibilities.

The height to which one can be lifted in ecstasy, only equals the depth to which the same person can descend in suffering; and both together measure the orbit of his or her capacity of usefulness to others, when fully ready for the work.

Wiser teachers than we, understanding these laws of growth, and working patiently yet unflinchingly for our highest good, may lead us through paths which we would fain avoid. Final results alone can justify their wisdom.

How much of modern spiritual experience is of this nature, I cannot pretend to say. Each subject of it must judge for him-

self, at his own risk. The possibility that any of it may be such, should lead those who are lookers on to temper their hasty judgments of such as may seem victims of strange hallucinations; and at the same time should encourage all tried souls to remain true to their holiest convictions, through whatever perplexities they may meet.

I have said things which the correspondent who drew them forth will not now understand. They were not written for him alone. Years hence he will see more of their significance.—*Banner of Light, U.S.A.*

A NEW MEDIUM.

WE extract the following account of manifestations in the presence of Mr. Charles Colchester, of New York, from a recent number of the *Herald of Progress*. It will be found to corroborate the interesting account given from personal observation by Mr. Coleman in the first article in this number, and to add some further particulars as to the origin of his mediumship:—

“Wishing, rather as a spectator than as an enquirer to witness the medium’s powers, I requested him to invite some of his stranger guests to be present at our interview. Accordingly, a young English gentleman, with whom I had entered into conversation while waiting, was selected; he was an unbeliever in the spiritual origin of this communion, having paid his first visit to a medium in Philadelphia but a week before. I was kindly permitted to examine and hold the questions propounded by this gentleman: and as I did not place them upon the table consecutively, the mind of the medium could not have influenced the response. Presently, raps were audible upon the table; the spirits were ready. I selected one of the folded papers, opened, and read the question to myself, then laid it, rolled into a pellet, before the medium. The words ran thus: ‘Who was present at my father’s funeral?’ Immediately the medium’s hand was controlled, and he wrote: ‘Your mother, and your cousins Jane and Annie, were present.’ ‘Oh,’ said the stranger, heaving a long breath, ‘it is true! those two cousins were present, but I did not even write their names or mention their relationship. It is very remarkable!’ To another question: ‘What was my father’s name, and where was he buried?’ The spirit wrote: ‘JAMES ROSS, Kensal Green, England.’ ‘Yes,’ he exclaimed, with moist eyes and flushed cheek, ‘It is correct—and so far off.’ Looking at the joyous face of this young

Englishman, I asked myself if life held any better gift than this power to communicate with the departed. '*So far off!*' What a bitter pang, a heart-ache, a weary longing those words betray! But, thank God, our beloved are not far off. Let them ascend to Immortality from the snowy heights of the Alps or Andes—let their bones whiten unburied on the frontiers of our new countries; let the briny ocean surge over their unshrouded corpses, let them be swept away by pestilence and famine, let them die on the battle-field, or rest in some sunny peaceful nook in the country churchyard, their souls are free. Call, and they will answer. They are not far off.

"What is this strange gift of mediumship which baffles all science, evades all law, save that of its own devising? An indefinable change steals over the face of Mr. Colchester. What weird, uncanny secret is he about to reveal? His soft flexible flesh betrays some internal irritation, his cheeks flush with a brighter tint, his head droops waitingly, his grasp tightens in your hands, which he has seized; some curious spell is at work; presently he withdraws his hold, the cloud passes from his countenance—'Come to the light!' he cries. You follow wonderingly; quickly the coat sleeve is uprolled, the linen cuff unclasped, the white strong arm unbared, and lo! in bold relief upon the close, fine-textured skin, crossing the blue veins in appealing contrast, stands forth in vermilion-tinted characters, a name. You can all read it—JOHN HOLMES! Rub it, scour it, wet your handkerchief to remove the ruddy spirit-penmanship, it only glows more brightly: It is not a horrible sight, that scarlet tracery beneath the transparent cuticle, but it affects the beholder strangely. In reply to my enquiries, Mr. Colchester informed me that he experiences a sensation of exhaustion while the name is being thus written.

"Mr. Colchester has been used by spirits as a medium but eighteen months. He discovered his powers accidentally, while engaged in a social chat with an acquaintance in an ice-cream saloon. The conversation turning upon Spiritualism, his companion, who was a partial medium, asserted that he could give Mr. C. the name of his deceased father—to his surprise the name was given correctly. 'Father,' exclaimed Mr. Colchester, astonished at the unexpected result, 'If you can do this through a stranger, you surely can manifest in the same way through myself. Do you remember that you promised, when I was a lad, to grant the first request I might make when I became of age? My twenty-first birthday is but just past. I now ask you to fulfil this promise by making me a medium.'

"Immediately his hand was controlled to write, and his powers as a test medium have continued from that hour unintermittingly.

He received his education in England, and possesses the bearing of a gentleman. He is courteous and considerate to investigators, lending himself cheerfully to any test demanded by their doubts. Names, ages, place of death, and other tests of identity, are given with unfailing success.

SUSAN G. HOYT."

SPIRITUALISM AND POPULAR NOVELISTS.

THERE are beliefs of the soul that are not formulated in the intellect, and that seldom rise through the superincumbent strata of conventionalism to the surface of the mind's consciousness. For the most part, our minds receive their impress from without, as the wax receives its impress from the seal. Belief, in the generality of instances, is a geographical accident, a reflection of "the very age and body of the time" and place in which our lot is cast. We sometimes speak of "habits of thought," and there is more truth in the phrase than at first appears. Much of what is called thought is, indeed, merely the mental costume of the period: we wear it as we do swallow-tailed coats,—as our fathers wore knee-breeches and shoe-buckles, because it is the *habit* most in fashion. There is no sovereign so absolute as King Public Opinion—no authority so infallible as that of the Protestant Pope—Mrs. Grundy. He must be a bold man who dare, even with "hated breath," question her decrees. A man may *think* for himself,—that's a misfortune that can't be helped, but he had better keep his thoughts to himself if they do not happen to agree with those of his neighbours. Woe to the unfortunate essayist or reviewer who dare to question any point of orthodox doctrine or ritual. The "drum ecclesiastic" will beat the alarm, and the jackals of the "religious press" will hunt him down with untiring step. In the East, when a patriotic Vizier wished to tell the Sultan a useful but unpalatable truth, he was compelled to do so by some indirect circuitous method, wrapping it up in some cunning story or fable, leaving the "moral" to be detected by the penetration of his auditor; and there is so far a resemblance between the Sultan and Mrs. Grundy that that which if spoken outright (say in the *Spiritual Magazine*) would be treason or heresy, is received with favour and applauded to the echo when sentimentally expressed or converted into an episode in the last new novel. Many of the deepest truths, those which show that we are sometimes "wiser than we know," often escape from the mind in what are called "works of imagination"—in the picture, the poem, and the novel. In their composition it often happens that the intuitions

of the soul have freer scope and a wider play, that its native beliefs assert their integrity, and vindicate their supremacy over conventionalism, or that conventionalism is altogether forgotten.

The novel is a form of literature which in our time has received new applications, and is year by year acquiring greater potency. Public opinion is influenced by it, perhaps, more widely and speedily than by any other. "Young England" sets forth its principles—not in a manifesto, but in a political novel. The advocate of freedom to the African appeals—not to "invincible statistics," but to invincible human sympathies; and for this purpose the novel is found considerably more effective than the "Blue-book." High and Low Church—not forgetting "Muscular Christianity"—fight their battles now not only in pews and pamphlets, but often in "three vols. octavo."—Mudie's being the chief battle-ground.

Why should not Spiritualism avail itself of this "so potent art?" We commend the consideration of this query to genius in search of a subject. There would be no occasion to fall back upon the clumsy mediæval machinery of Horace Walpole or Sir Walter Scott; no need for the "Mysteries of Udolpho," or the horrors of Frankenstein and Zanozi; albeit, we regard the latter work as the masterpiece of its author—the highest work of art in its particular sphere which any novelist has yet put forward.* To illustrate the relations between man and the world of invisible intelligences, the novelist need not go beyond the accredited facts—"Stranger than Fiction" of modern Spiritualism. It is indeed on the foundation of its leading principle, and as exemplified in certain of its phases (as we hope to show more fully in future papers) that some of the highest achievements in art (using the word in its widest scope) have been built. At present, the most cursory examination may show that already many of our best popular novels are leavened with

* In this connection it may be interesting to supply the following anecdote, the authenticity of which may be relied on, as I had it from a gentleman—a friend of my own—who was present on the occasion. I have given it in his own words:—"The Right Hon. Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton and his son paid a visit, in 1854-5, to Mr. Rymer's, at Ealing, where Mr. Home was then on a visit. Among the manifestations, a spirit, whose rappings were unusually loud, said in answer to Sir Edward's demand to know who, &c., &c., 'I am the spirit that influenced you to write *Zanozi*.' 'Indeed! I wish you would give me some proof of your presence. Will you take my hand?' His hand was grasped with great power, which made him start from his seat. The alphabet was called for, and the words 'We wish you to believe in the——' Whilst they were suggesting the word, the sentence was closed by a cross being put into Sir Edward's hand. It was made of card-board, and had been lying on a small table containing little drawing-room ornaments, in a distant part of the room. Sir Edward asked permission to take the cross away as a *souvenir*, to which Mrs. Rymer consented, provided, as she jocularly said, 'You will promise, Sir Edward, to observe the injunction.'"

the spiritual idea, and that it is this which constitutes the interest of many of their most effective passages. So true is Spiritualism to the cravings of the human heart, that when it is put forward free from admixture with any obnoxious elements, and from all degrading associations, it finds a ready and a universal response, even from those who receive with incredulity facts of the spiritual kind which clash with their pre-conceived opinions.

We shall probably best evidence this, by giving from some of the best known and favourite novels of the day such illustrations as our space will permit. And first, let us show some of the obligations we are under in this respect to our "lady-novelists." Perhaps we cannot do so better than by commencing with one of the most remarkable works of this class—one which certainly needs not our commendation—*Jane Eyre*. Its perusal, we think, must satisfy the reader that it is an expression of earnest thoughts and feelings in the mind of the writer, and incline him to the belief that much in it, even in the way of incident, is the outgrowth of personal observation and experience. On this point, however, we now are not left in doubt, it is no longer an inference, but a known fact. But first, let us glance at what her biographer, Mrs. Gaskell, tells us as to the author's mode of composition, which to those who have paid attention to the question of spiritual influx will be found very suggestive. She says:—

I remember, however, many little particulars, which Miss Brontë gave me, in answer to my enquiries respecting her mode of composition, &c. She said, that it was not every day that she could write. Sometimes weeks or even months elapsed before she felt that she had anything to add to that portion of her story, which was already written. Then, *some morning she would waken up, and the progress of her tale lay clear, and bright before her in distinct vision.** When this was the case, all her care was to discharge her household and filial duties, so as to obtain leisure to sit down, and write down the incidents and consequent thoughts, which were, in fact, *more present to her mind at such times than her actual life itself.* Yet, notwithstanding this "possession," as it were, &c.

And again:—

I asked her whether she had ever taken opium, as the description given of its effects in *Villette* was so exactly like what I had experienced—vivid and

* Something like this is related by the Rev. T. L. Harris, in the following passage in the *Millennial Age*:—"A novelist, in whom we may have every confidence, affirms this statement:—"I saw the image of a book with all its thoughts, its scenes, its incidents, gathered up into a human form: it stood before my eyes palpable, gliding, as it were, into the brain, and taking possession of it, so that I embodied scene after scene without any creative effort upon my own part, and the result was a volume complete, in scene, in story, in incident, to its last catastrophe." Mr. Harris, as is well-known, affirms that his *Poems and Hymns*, and *The Arcana of Christianity*, were all spiritually given him, and after alluding to the rapidity with which, without any mental effort on his part, they were produced; he adds:—"In the degree in which the man who has the organisation and the use of the artist in words, becomes the child and agent of the spirit, this is the result. The work of days before, becomes the work of moments now; the work of years before, is gathered into weeks, or woven into the texture of a flying season."

exaggerated presence of objects, of which the outlines were indistinct, or lost in golden mist, &c. She replied, that she had never, to her knowledge, taken a grain of it in any shape, but that she had followed the process she always adopted when she had to describe anything which had not fallen within her own experience; she had thought intently on it for many and many a night before falling to sleep—wondered what it was like, or how it would be, till at length, sometimes after the progress of her story had been arrested at this one point for weeks, she awakened up in the morning with all clear before her, *as if she had in reality gone through the experience, and then could describe it, word for word, as it had happened.* I cannot account for this psychologically. I only am sure that it was so, because she said it.

But, let us now give one or two incidents from her story. Jane has been describing a great crisis in her life, in which her heart was wrung with agony. She continues:—

That night I never thought to sleep; but a slumber fell on me as soon as I lay in bed. I was transported in thought to the scenes of childhood: I dreamt I lay in the red-room at Gateshead; that the night was dark, and my mind impressed with strange fears. The light that long ago had struck me into syncope, recalled in this vision, seemed glidingly to mount the wall, and tremblingly to pause in the centre of the obscured ceiling. I lifted up my head to look: the roof resolved to clouds, high and dim; the gleam was such as the moon imparts to vapours she is about to sever. I watched her come—watched with the strangest anticipation; as though some word of doom were to be written on her disk. She broke forth as never moon yet burst from cloud: a hand first penetrated the sable folds and waved them away; then, not a moon, but a white human form shone in the azure, inclining a glorious brow earthward. It gazed and gazed on me. It spoke to my spirit: immeasurably distant was the tone, yet so near, it whispered in my heart—

“My daughter, flee temptation!”

“Mother, I will.”

So I answered after I had waked from the trance-like dream.

Her action consequent upon this vision influences her whole after-life. In the next passage we are about to quote, the importunity of her cousin had nearly wrung from her a resolution that would probably have been fatal, not only to her own future, but to that of another whose happiness was most dear to her. Her fate was trembling on the instant balance:—

I sincerely, deeply, fervently longed to do what was right; and only that. “Show me, show me the path!” I entreated of Heaven. I was excited more than I had ever been; and whether what followed was the effect of excitement, the reader shall judge.

All the house was still; for I believe all, except St. John and myself, were now retired to rest. The one candle was dying out: the room was full of moonlight. My heart beat fast and thick: I heard its throb. Suddenly it stood still to an inexpressible feeling that thrilled it through, and passed at once to my head and extremities. The feeling was not like an electric shock; but it was quite as sharp, as strange, as startling: it acted on my senses as if their utmost activity hitherto had been but torpor; from which they were now summoned, and forced to wake. They rose expectant: eye and ear waited, while the flesh quivered on my bones.

“What have you heard? Who do you see?” asked St. John. I saw nothing: but I heard a voice somewhere cry—

“Jane! Jane! Jane!” nothing more.

“Oh, God! what is it?” I gasped.

I might have said, “Where is it?” for it did not seem in the room—nor in the house—nor in the garden: it did not come out of the air—nor from under the earth—nor from overhead. I had heard it—where, or whence, for ever

impossible to know! And it was the voice of a human being—a known, loved, well-remembered voice—that of Edward Fairfax Rochester; and it spoke in pain and woe wildly, verily, urgently.

"I am coming!" I cried. "Wait for me! Oh, I will come!" I flew to the door, and looked into the passage: it was dark. I ran out into the garden: it was void.

"Where are you?" I exclaimed.

The hills beyond Marsh Glen sent the answer faintly back—"Where are you?" I listened. The wind sighed low in the firs: all was moorland loneliness and midnight hush.

"Down superstition!" I commented, as that spectre rose up black by the black yew at the gate. "This is not thy deception, nor thy witchcraft: it is the work of nature. She was roused, and did—no miracle—but her best."

There is a sequel to this strange narration—the other side of the story, as subsequently told by Rochester to Jane, which we subjoin:—

Of late, Jane—only—only of late—I began to see and acknowledge the hand of God in my doom. I began to experience remorse, repentance; the wish for reconciliation to my Maker. I began sometimes to pray: very brief prayers they were, but very sincere.

"Some days since: nay, I can number them—four; it was last Monday night, a singular mood came over me: one in which grief replaced frenzy—sorrow, sullenness. I had long had the impression that since I could nowhere find you, you must be dead. Late that night—perhaps it might be between eleven and twelve o'clock—ere I retired to my dreary rest, I supplicated God, that, if it seemed good to Him, I might soon be taken from this life, and admitted to that world to come, where there was still hope of rejoining Jane.

"I was in my own room, and sitting by the window, which was open: it soothed me to feel the balmy night-air; though I could see no stars and only by a vague, luminous haze, knew the presence of a moon. I longed for thee, Jane! Oh, I longed for thee both with soul and flesh! I asked of God, at once in anguish and humility, if I had not been long enough desolate, afflicted, tormented; and might not soon taste bliss and peace once more. That I merited all I endured, I acknowledged—that I could scarcely endure more, I pleaded; and the alpha and omega of my heart's wishes broke involuntarily from my lips in the words—'Jane! Jane! Jane!'"

"Did you speak these words aloud?"

"I did, Jane. If any listener had heard me, he would have thought me mad: I pronounced them with such frantic energy."

"And it was last Monday night: somewhere near midnight?"

"Yes; but the time is of no consequence: what followed is the strange point. You will think me superstitious,—some superstition I have in my blood, and always had: nevertheless, this is true—true at least it is that I heard what I now relate.

"As I exclaimed 'Jane! Jane! Jane!' a voice—I cannot tell whence the voice came, but I know whose voice it was—replied, 'I am coming: wait for me;' and a moment after, went whispering on the wind, the words—'Where are you?'"

"I'll tell you, if I can, the idea, the picture these words opened to my mind: yet it is difficult to express what I want to express. Ferndean is buried, as you see, in a heavy wood, where sound falls dull, and dies unreverberating. 'Where are you?' seemed spoken amongst mountains; for I heard a hill-sent echo repeat the words. Cooler and fresher at the moment the gale seemed to visit my brow: I could have deemed that in some wild, lone scene, I and Jane were meeting. In spirit, I believe we must have met. You no doubt were, at that hour, in unconscious sleep, Jane: perhaps your soul wandered from its cell to comfort mine; for those were your accents—as certain as I live—they were yours!"

Reader, it was on Monday night—near midnight—that I too had received the

mysterious summons: those were the very words by which I replied to it. I listened to Mr. Rochester's narrative; but made no disclosure in return. The coincidence struck me as too awful and inexplicable to be communicated or discussed. If I told anything, my tale would be such as must necessarily make a profound impression on the mind of my hearer: and that mind, yet from its sufferings too prone to gloom, needed not the deeper shade of the supernatural. I kept these things then, and pondered them in my heart.

I have quoted these passages at length, because they illustrate not only a wonderful psychical law, but also the personal experience of the writer. The "Shadow clothed from head to foot" had crossed the wild Yorkshire moors, and entered her father's humble parsonage again and again; and each time as one of the household band disappeared, leaving a vacant place around the hearth, and in her sisterly heart, there came to her in the language of her biographer, (who attributes it to the "grim superstitions learnt from servants in her childhood"):—

Such an intense longing once more to stand face to face with the souls of her sisters, as no one but she could have felt. It seemed as if the very strength of her yearning should have compelled them to appear Some one conversing with her once objected, in my presence, to that part of *Jane Eyre*, in which she hears Rochester's voice crying out to her in a great crisis of her life, he being many, many miles distant at the time. I do not know what incident was in Miss Brontë's recollection, when she replied, in a low voice, drawing in her breath, "BUT IT IS A TRUE THING; IT REALLY HAPPENED!"

With a knowledge of this fact, we can understand her as expressing her own deep convictions, when she says:—

Presentiments are strange things! and so are sympathies; and so are signs: and the three combined make one mystery to which humanity has not yet found the key. I never laughed at presentiments in my life; because *I have had strange ones of my own*. Sympathies, I believe, exist: (for instance, between far-distant, long absent, wholly estranged relatives; asserting, notwithstanding their alienation, the unity of the source to which each traces his origin) whose workings baffle mortal comprehension. And signs, for aught we know, may be but the sympathies of Nature with man.

And again, when she affirms in a still higher and more solemn tone:—

Besides this earth, and besides the race of men, there is an invisible world and a kingdom of spirits: that world is round us, for it is everywhere; and those spirits watch us, for they are commissioned to guard us; and if we were dying under pain and shame, if scorn smote us on all sides, and hatred crushed us, angels see our tortures, recognise our innocence (if innocent we be), and God waits only the separation of spirit from flesh to crown us with a full reward. Why, then, should we ever sink overwhelmed with distress, when life is so soon over, and death is so certain an entrance to happiness—to glory?

So another distinguished novelist and something more—Harriet Beecher Stowe, writing under the heart's best inspirations, enquires:—

May we look among the bands of ministering spirits for our departed ones? Whom would God be more likely to send us? Have we in heaven a friend who knew us to the heart's core—a friend to whom we have unfolded our soul in its most secret recesses—to whom we have confessed our weaknesses and deplored our griefs? If we are to have a ministering spirit, who better adapted?

Have we not memories which correspond to such a belief? When our soul has been cast down, has never an invisible voice whispered, "There is lifting up?" Have not gales and breezes of sweet and healing thought been wafted over us, as if an angel had shaken from his wings the odours of Paradise? Many a one, we are confident, can remember such things; and whence come they?

Why do the children of the pious mother, whose grave has grown green and smooth with years, seem often to walk through perils and dangers, fearful and imminent as the crossing of Mahommed's fiery gulf on the edge of a drawn sword, yet walk unhurt? Ah! could we see that glorious form! that face where the angel conceals not the mother—our questions would be answered.

It may be possible that a friend is sometimes taken, because the Divine One sees that their ministry can act upon us more powerfully from the unseen world than amid the infirmities of mortal intercourse.

Here the soul, distracted and hemmed in by human events, and by bodily infirmities, often scarce knows itself, and makes no impressions on others correspondent to its desires. The mother would fain electrify the heart of her child; she yearns and burns in vain to make her soul effective on its soul, and to inspire it with a spiritual and holy life; but all her own weaknesses, faults, and mortal cares cramp and confine her, till death breaks all fetters—and then first truly alive, risen, purified, and at rest, she may do calmly, sweetly, and certainly what amid the tempests and tossings of life she laboured for painfully and fitfully.

Conformably to these views, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she represents the face of the dying Eva as "wearing only a high and almost sublime expression—the overshadowing presence of spiritual natures;" and "the large clear eyes rolled up and fixed" at the glorious spiritual vision she beheld; "those eyes that spoke so much of heaven."* The same thought of "the overshadowing presence of spiritual natures" is delicately conveyed in representing the usually gay St. Clare, exclaiming, while in full health and the prime of life, "I don't know what makes me think of my mother so much to night, I have a strange kind of feeling, *as if she was near me*. I keep thinking of things she used to say. Strange what brings these past things so vividly back to us sometimes." That night was his last. He turned into a *café* to look over an evening paper, and while there was fatally wounded in seeking to avert a drunken fray. Being borne home:—

The sinking paleness of death fell on him; but with it there fell, *as if shed from the wings of some pitying spirit*, a beautiful expression of peace, like that of a wearied child who sleeps.

So he lay for a few moments. They saw that the mighty hand was on him.

* How many mothers, who have read this story and admired little Eva, have experienced the truth of what Mrs. Stowe says in the following passage:—

"Has there ever been a child like Eva? Yes, there have been; but their names are always on grave-stones; and their sweet smiles, their heavenly eyes, their singular words and ways, are among the buried treasures of yearning hearts. In how many families do you hear the legend that all the goodness and graces of the living are nothing to the peculiar charms of one who is *not*? It is as if Heaven had an especial band of angels, whose office it was to sojourn for a season here, and endear to them the wayward human heart, that they might bear it upward with them in their homeward flight. When you see that deep, spiritual light in the eye—when the little soul reveals itself in words sweeter and wiser than the ordinary words of children—hope not to retain that child, for the seal of Heaven is on it, and the light of immortality looks out from its eyes."

Just before the spirit parted, he opened his eyes, with a sudden light, as of joy and recognition, and said "*Mother!*" and he was gone.

After the death of St. Clare, Uncle Tom finds a very different master in the brutal savage, Legree.

In that simple heart (Uncle Tom's) waged a fierce conflict: the crushing sense of wrong, the foreshadowing of a whole life of future misery, the wreck of all past hopes, mournfully tossing in the soul's sight, like dead corpses of wife and child, and friend, rising from the dark wave, and surging in the face of the half-drowned mariner! Wrapping about him a tattered blanket, which formed his only bed-clothing, he stretched himself in the straw, and fell asleep.

In dreams, a gentle voice came over his ears: he was sitting on the mossy seat in the garden by Lake Pontchartrain, and Eva, with her serious eyes bent downward, was reading to him from the Bible. Gradually the words seemed to melt and fade, as in a divine music; the child raised her deep eyes and fixed them lovingly on him, and rays of warmth and comfort seemed to go from them to his heart; and, as if wafted on the music, she seemed to rise on shining wings, from which flakes and spangles of gold fell off like stars, and she was gone!

Tom awoke. Was it a dream? Let it pass for one. *But who shall say that that sweet young spirit which in life so yearned to comfort and console the distressed, was forbidden of God to assume His ministry after death?*

It is a beautiful belief
That ever round our head
Are hovering, on angel wings,
The spirits of the dead.

Nor can we omit that vision of the Divine Man, that in his utter dejection and prostration lifted him above all his cares and miseries, and gave him a foretaste of that peace and blessedness and freedom which he was so soon fully to realize in the Master's kingdom. On the very border of despair—

Tom sat like one stunned at the fire; suddenly everything around him seemed to fade, and a vision rose before him of One crowned with thorns, buffeted and bleeding. Tom gazed in awe and wonder at the majestic patience of the face; the deep pathetic eyes thrilled him to his inmost heart; his soul awoke as, with floods of emotion, he stretched out his hands and fell upon his knees; when gradually the vision changed, the sharp thorns became rays of glory; and in splendour inconceivable he saw the same face bending compassionately towards him, and a voice said: "He that overcometh shall sit down with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne."

After so glorious a spiritual vision well might he "look up to the silent, everlasting stars—*types of the angelic hosts who ever look down on man*" and make the night ring with his triumphant hymns. "So short now seemed the remaining voyage of life—so near, so vivid, seemed eternal blessedness—that life's uttermost woes fell from him unharmed."

Ah! but this is all a mere invention of the writer without warranty in fact, it may be said. Not so, Mrs. Stowe tells us—

Those who have been familiar with the religious histories of the slave population, know that relations like what we have narrated *are very common among them.* We have heard some from their own lips of a very touching and affecting character.

Yes, and "those who have been familiar with the religious

histories" of other populations can give similar testimony. It is frequent in the obituary of pious Christian men and women of every denomination.

In Miss Muloch's novel of *John Halifax* there is an incident given, which in its main feature resembles that concerning Rochester, quoted from *Jane Eyre*. Whether like that it rests upon any fact in personal experience we are not able to say. John is alone in his chamber, apparently dying of soul-sickness; his friend, Phineas Fletcher, who has been watching him in an agony of grief, having left him to see and speak to her whom he knew to be, though unwittingly, the cause. On his return he is astonished to hear John address him in—

The old way of speaking—the old, natural voice, as I had not heard it for weeks.

"You must not grieve over me any more, dear lad; to-morrow, please God I mean to be quite well again."

Amidst all my joys, I marvelled over what could be the cause of so miraculous a change.

"You would smile if I told you—only a dream. Yes, she sat there talking. She told me she knew I loved her—loved her so much that I was dying for her; that it was very wrong; that I must rise up and do my work in the world—do it for Heaven's sake, not for hers; that a true man should live nobly for the woman he loves—it is only a coward who dies for her."

I listened, wonder-struck—for these were the very words that Ursula March might have uttered—the very spirit that seemed to shine in her eyes that night; the last night she and John spoke to one another.

The rest of the dream and its fulfilment we need not quote; but we present a scene from their married life.

Their first-born child, poor blind Muriel, their especial pet, the darling of the family, is dying, though as yet they know it not:—

The children were wildly happy. All the afternoon they kept up their innocent little games by Muriel's bed-side; she sometimes sharing, sometimes listening apart. Only once or twice came that wistful, absent look, as if she were listening partly to us, and partly to those we heard not; as if through the wide open orb the soul were straining at sight's wonderful and new—sights unto which her eyes were the clear-seeing, and ours the blank and blind.

No wonder that when no longer present to material vision in the family circle—

Her image only a shade, yet often more real than any of these living children, seemed perpetually among us. It crept through the house at dusk; in winter fire-light it sat smiling in dim corners; in Spring mornings it moved about the garden borders, with tiny soft footsteps, neither seen nor heard.

We will cite only one other passage from this book. John, in a serious conversation with his daughter Maud, remarks:—

There are so many sad things in life that we have to take upon trust, and hear, and be patient with, yet never understand. I suppose we shall some day.

His eyes wandered upward to the wide-arched blue sky, which in its calm beauty makes us fancy that Paradise is there, even though we know that "the Kingdom of Heaven is within us," and that the kingdom of spirits may be around us and about us everywhere.

Take another "novel of the season"—and one that we hope will continue popular for many seasons—*Adam Bede*, which though written under the pseudonyme of "George Eliot" is known to be the production of a lady. Its opening chapters illustrate the vivid belief in spiritual agency among the early Methodists. Dinah Morris, the Methodist preacher and evangelist, is so told—

Had that belief in the visible manifestations of Jesus, which is common among the Methodists, and she communicated it irresistibly to her hearers; she made them feel that He was among them bodily, and might at any moment shew Himself to them in some way that would strike anguish and penitence into their hearts.

She herself "in the days of her vanity" had been arrested by this solemn vision. "One day when she put her new cap on and looked in the glass, she saw a bleeding face crowned with thorns." And in reference to mundane affairs and their relation to spirituals, she speaks much as a "medium" of the present day might do; as may be seen in the following colloquy:—

"You've quite made up your mind to go back to Snowfield on Saturday, is that?"—"Yes," said Dinah quietly, "I'm called there. *It was borne in upon my mind while I was meditating on Sunday night, as sister Allen, who's in a bad line, is in need of me. I saw her as plain as we see that bit of thin white cloud, beckoning up her poor thin hand and beckoning to me.*"

Of the interlocutors in this dialogue, the author observes:—

I cannot pretend that Seth and Dinah were anything else than Methodists—indeed of that modern type which reads quarterly reviews and attends in parlours with pillared porticoes, but of a very old-fashioned kind. They believed in *present miracles*, in instantaneous conversions, in *revelations by dreams and visions*.

Adam Bede, however, is no Methodist, and is not at all given to dreams and visions. He is a very practical man who has a firm belief in mathematics and "an uncommon notion of carpentering." His father has gone the wrong way in life, and puts a steady industrious son to shame by his daily errors. One night, on returning from his daily work, Adam finds his father gone away, and work that should have been completed left undone. His mother in reply to his anxious enquiry, "Where's father?" answers: "He went off to Treddles' on this forenoon, an's niver come back. I doubt he's got to th' 'Waggin Overthrow' for good." Adam, "too angry to speak," walks into the workshop and works there manfully through the night to finish a coffin promised to be ready at the neighbouring village by seven the next morning; not however, as may well be imagined, without some grumbling:—

Father's a sore cross to me, an's likely to be for many a year to come. What can I do? I've got th' health and the limbs, and the sperrit to bear it.

At this moment a smart rap, as if with a willow wand, was given at the house door, and Gyp, instead of barking, as might have been expected, gave a loud howl. Adam, very much startled, went at once to the door and opened it.

Nothing was there: all was still, as when he opened it an hour before: the leaves were motionless, and the light of the stars showed the placid field on both sides of the brook quite empty of visible life. Adam walked round the house, and still saw nothing except a rat which darted into the woodshed as he passed. He went in again, wondering; the sound was so peculiar, that, the moment he heard it, it called up the image of the willow wand striking the door. He could not help a little shudder, as he remembered how often his mother had told him of just such a sound coming as a sign when some one was dying. Adam was not a man to be gratuitously superstitious; but he had the blood of the peasant in him as well as of the artizan, and a peasant can no more help believing in a traditional superstition than a horse can help trembling when he sees a camel. Besides, he had that mental combination which is at once humble in the region of mystery and keen in the region of knowledge: it was the depth of his reverence quite as much as his hard common-sense, which gave him his disinclination to doctrinal religion, and he often checked Seth's argumentative Spiritualism by saying, "Eh, it's a big mystery; thee knowest but little about it." And so it happened that Adam was at once penetrating and credulous. If a new building had fallen down and he had been told that this was a Divine judgment, he would have said, "May be; but the bearing o' the roof and walls wasn't right, else it wouldn't ha' come down;" yet he believed in dreams and prognostics, and you see he shuddered at the idea of the stroke with the willow wand.

But he had the best antidote against imaginative dread in the necessity for getting on with the coffin, and for the next ten minutes his hammer was ringing so uninterruptedly that other sounds, if there were any, might well be overpowered. A pause came, however, when he had to take up his ruler, and now again came the strange rap, and again Gyp howled. Adam was at the door without the loss of a moment; but again all was still, and the starlight showed there was nothing but the dew-laden grass in front of the cottage.

Adam for a moment thought uncomfortably about his father; but of late years he had never come home at dark hours from Treddleston, and there was every reason for believing that he was then sleeping off his drunkenness at the "Waggon Overthrown." Besides, to Adam the conception of the future was inseparable from the painful image of his father, that the fear of any fatal accident to him was excluded by the deeply-infixed fear of his continual degradation. The next thought that occurred to him was one that made him slip off his shoes and tread lightly upstairs, to listen at the bedroom doors. But both Seth and his mother were breathing regularly.

Adam came down and set to work again, saying to himself, "I won't go the door again. It's no use staring about to catch sight of a sound. May be there's a world about us as we can't see, but th' ear's quicker than the eye, and catches a sound from 't now and then. Some people think they get a sight o' 't too, but they're mostly folks whose eyes are not much use to 'em at anything else. For my part, I think it's better to see when your perpendicular's true, than to see a ghost."

Such thoughts as these are apt to grow stronger and stronger as daylight quenches the candles and the birds begin to sing. By the time the red sunlight shone on the brass nails that formed the initials on the lid of the coffin, any lingering foreboding from the sound of the willow wand was merged in satisfaction that the work was done and the promise redeemed. There was no need to call Seth, for he was already moving overhead, and presently came down stairs.

"Now, lad," said Adam, as Seth made his appearance, "the coffin's done, and we can take it over to Brox'on, and be back again before half after six. I'll take a mouthful o' oat-cake, and then we'll be off."

The coffin was soon propped on the tall shoulders of the two brothers, and they were making their way, followed close by Gyp, out of the little woodyard into the lane at the back of the house. It was but about a mile and a half to Broxton over the opposite slope, and their road wound very pleasantly along lanes and across fields, where the pale woodbines and the dog-roses were scenting the hedgerows, and the birds were twittering and trilling in the tall leafy boughs of oak and elm. It was a strangely-mingled picture—the fresh youth

of the summer morning, with its Eden-like peace and loveliness, the stalwart strength of the two brothers in their rusty working clothes, and the long coffin on their shoulders. They paused for the last time before a small farm-house outside the village of Broxton. By six o'clock the task was done, the coffin nailed down and Adam and Seth were on their way home. They chose a shorter way homeward which would take them across the fields and the brook in front of the house. Adam had not mentioned to Seth what had happened in the night, but he still retained sufficient impression from it himself to say—

"Seth, lad, if father isn't come home by the time we've had our breakfast, I think it'll be as well for thee to go over to 'Treddles'on and look after him, and thee canst get me the brass wire I want. Never mind about losing an hour at thy work; we can make that up. What dost say?"

"I'm willing," said Seth. "But see what clouds have gathered since we set out. I'm thinking we shall have more rain. It'll be a sore time for the hay-making if the meadows are flooded again. The brook's fine and full now: another day's rain 'ud cover the plank, and we should have to go round by the road."

They were coming across the valley now, and had entered the pasture through which the brook ran.

"Why, what's that sticking against the willow?" continued Seth, beginning to walk faster. Adam's heart rose to his mouth: the vague anxiety about his father was changed into a great dread. He made no answer to Seth, but ran forward, preceded by Gyp, who began to bark uneasily; and in two moments he was at the bridge.

This was what the omen meant, then! And the grey-haired father, of whom he had thought with a sort of hardness a few hours ago, as certain to live to be a thorn in his side, was perhaps even then struggling with that watery death. This was the first thought that flashed through Adam's conscience, before he had time to seize the coat and drag out the tall heavy body. Seth was already by his side, helping him, and when they had it on the bank, the two sons in the first moments knelt and looked with mute awe at the glazed eyes, forgetting that there was need for action—forgetting everything but that their father lay dead before them.

Leaving our "lady novelists," let us turn to one distinguished as scholar, historian, and diplomatist, and in whose writings a clear vigorous style is combined with an almost womanly grace and delicacy and tenderness. We believe that to many thousands on both sides of the Atlantic the recent departure from us of the accomplished author of the *Sketch Book*, and *Bracebridge Hall* has been felt as a personal loss. In the latter work, Washington Irving speaks of "the doctrine of departed spirits returning to visit the scenes and beings dear to them during the body's existence," as being "in itself awfully solemn and sublime." From our ignorance of the nature and operations of the soul, even while it is continually present to our consciousness in its connection with the body, he reasons that it would be presumptuous "to deny its powers and operations when released from its fleshly prison-house;" and he asks, "What could be more consoling than the idea that the souls of those whom we once loved were permitted to return and watch over our welfare? . . . A belief of this kind would, I should think, be a new incentive to virtue; rendering us circumspect even in our most secret moments, from the idea that those we once loved and honoured were invisible witnesses of all our actions. And speaking of his own loving and

beloved departed ones, he exclaims: "I feel as if now, at this deep hour of night, in this silence and solitude, I could receive their visitation with the most solemn but unalloyed delight."

Let our next illustration be from one who we think will not be accused of being a weakly sentimentalist—that stalwart champion of "muscular Christianity"—the author of *Tom Brown's School Days*. Tom is having his first conversation with his young friend and school-fellow Arthur since Arthur's recovery from a dangerous fever.

"But, Tom, I've had such strange thoughts about death lately. . . . Sometimes I think they're wrong; but, do you know, I don't think in my heart I could be sorry at the death of any of my friends." Tom, it may be imagined, is not a little astonished at this announcement, and naturally thinks Arthur a little light-headed. Arthur soon undeceives him, and insists on a little serious talk with him, in which he tells him how it all happened—how at first he thought it hard to be taken away from mother and sisters and all he loved just as he was beginning to see his way in many things, and to feel that he might be a man and do a man's work. And he goes on to say:—

I got terribly impatient, and accused God of injustice, and strove to justify myself, and the harder I strove the deeper I sunk. Then the image of my dear father often came across me, but I turned from it. Whenever it came, a heavy numbing throb seemed to take hold of my heart, and say, dead, dead. . . .

And so I struggled and plunged, deeper and deeper, and went down into a living black tomb. I was alone there, with no power to stir or think; alone with myself; beyond the reach of all human fellowship; beyond Christ's reach. I thought in my nightmare. . . .

I don't know how long I was in that state. For more than a day, I know, for I was quite conscious, and lived my outer life all the time, and took my medicines, and spoke to my mother, and heard what they said. But I didn't take much note of time, I thought time was over for me, and that that tomb was what was beyond. Well, on last Sunday morning, as I seemed to lie in that tomb, alone, as I thought, for ever and ever, the black dead wall was cleft in two, and I was caught up and borne through into the light by some great power, some living mighty spirit. Tom, do you remember the living creatures and the wheels in Ezekiel? It was just like that: "when they went I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host; when they stood they let down their wings"—"and they went every one straight forward; whither the spirit was to go they went, and they turned not when they went." And we rushed through the bright air, which was full of myriads of living creatures, and paused on the brink of a great river. And the power held me up, and I knew that that great river was the grave, and death dwelt there; but not the death I had met in the black tomb, that I felt was gone for ever. For on the other bank of the great river I saw men and women and children rising up pure and bright, and the tears were wiped from their eyes, and they put on glory and strength, and all weariness and pain fell away. And beyond were a multitude which no man could number, and they worked at some great work; and they who rose from the river went on and joined in the work. They all worked, and each worked in a different way, but all at the same work. And I saw there my father, and the men in the old town whom I knew when I was a child: many a hard stern man, who never came to church, and whom they called atheist and infidel. There they were, side by side with my father, whom I had seen toil

and die for them, and women and little children, and the seal was on the foreheads of all. And I longed to see what the work was, and could not; so I tried to plunge in the river, for I thought I would join them, but I could not. Then I looked about to see how they got into the river. And this I could not see, but I saw myriads on this side, and they too worked, and I knew that it was the same work; and the same seal was on their foreheads. And though I saw that there was toil and anguish in the work of these, and that most that were working were blind and feeble, yet I longed no more to plunge into the river, but more and more to know what the work was. And as I looked I saw my mother and my sisters, and I saw the Doctor, and you, Tom, and hundreds more whom I knew; and at last I saw myself too, and I was toiling and doing ever so little a piece of the great work. Then it all melted away, and the power left me, and as it left me I thought I heard a voice say, "The vision is for an appointed time; though it tarry, wait for it, for in the end it shall speak and not lie, it shall surely come, it shall not tarry." It was early morning I know then, it was so quiet and cool, and my mother was fast asleep in the chair by my bedside; *but it wasn't only a dream of mine. I know it wasn't a dream.* Then I fell into a deep sleep, and only woke after afternoon chapel; and the Doctor came and gave me the sacrament, as I told you. I told him and my mother I should get well—I knew I should; but I couldn't tell them why. Tom," said Arthur gently, after another minute, "do you see why I could not grieve now to see my dearest friend die? It can't be—it isn't all fever or illness. God would never have let me see it so clear if it wasn't true. I don't understand it all yet—it will take me my life and longer to do that—to find out what the work is.

The Rev. Professor Kingsley, who belongs to the same school as the last writer, in his novel of *Westward, Ho!* represents Mrs. Leigh as enquiring of her son Amyas, concerning his brother Frank, a martyr to the Inquisition:—

"When did he—?"

"Three years ago, and more. Within two months of our sailing."

"Ah, yes! he told me so."

"Told you so?"

"Yes; *the dear lad has often come to see me in my sleep*: but you never came. I guessed how it was—as it should be."

"But I loved you none the less, mother."

"I know that, too: but you were busy with the men, you know, sweet; so your spirit could not come roving home like his, which was free. Yes—all as it should be."

The reader of this work will remember too the vision of Amyas among the rocks after he had been struck blind by lightning; and that again of Ayacanora in the church at Bideford, at the baptism of the red man:—

The service was half performed, when a heavy sigh, or rather groan, made all eyes turn, and Ayacanora sank fainting upon Mrs. Leigh's bosom. She was carried out, and to a neighbouring house; and when she came to herself, told a strange story. How as she was standing there, trying to recollect whether she, too, had ever been baptized, the church seemed to grow larger, the priest's dress richer; the walls were covered with pictures, and above the altar, in jewelled robes, stood a lady, and in her arms a babe. Soft music sounded in her ears; the air was full (on that she insisted much) of fragrant odour which filled the church like mist; and through it she saw not one, but many Indians, standing by the font; and a lady held her by the hand, and she was a little girl again.

And after many questionings, so accurate was her recollection, not only of the scene, but of the building, that Yeo pronounced—

A christened woman she is, Madam, if Popish christening is worth calling such; and has seen Indians christened, too, in the cathedral church at Quito, the

inside whereof I know well enough, and too well: for I sat there three mortal hours in a San Benito, to hear a friar preach his false doctrines, not knowing whether I was to be burnt or not the next day.

Even Mr, Dickens, to whom in his ordinary moods the idea of a ghost, or of spiritual agency, appears to present itself only as a funny subject—to be treated with *badinage* and facetious pleasantry; yet, when under the influence of a more serious feeling could write:—

It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in our nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would seem almost as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those whom we loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may these patient angels hover around us, watching for the spell which is so seldom uttered and so soon forgotten.

And his last Christmas tale—*A Message from the Sea*—contains two capital spirit-stories, written as if he believed that they, or stories like them, *might* be true. We are happy to chronicle even the beginnings of an improvement. But we must here bring our extracts to a close. It will be seen that we have taken them—not from the trash which under the name of novels so frequently encumber the shelves of circulating libraries, but from the best works of the best and most popular of our recent and living novelists; from writers who have chiefly adopted this form of literature as being the readiest and most effective means of impressing important truths on the largest number of persons. And these passages (as would be still more evident by examining them in connexion with their contexts) are among the most serious that can be found in the books whence they are taken, and evidently express the strongest and most interior convictions and feelings of the writers. We are not habitual novel readers: novels indeed being rather out of our line; but without wishing to add the slightest impulse to the present mania for novel reading, we may yet remark that in this, as in other corn-fields of literature, the industrious gleaner may add a goodly sheaf to his illustrations of Spiritualism.

T. S.

Why is it that the great proportion of our pastors seem to conspire together with one consent to make the periodical duty of listening to them as hard as possible? Can they imagine there is profit or pleasure in a discourse wandering wearily round in a circle, or dragging a slow length along of truisms and trivialities? In the best of congregations there can be but few alchemists; and without that science who is to extract the essence of truth from the *motes in-congesta* of crust moralities? To persuade or dissuade you must interest the head or the heart. I admire those who can do either successfully, but I do protest against those clerical tyrants who shelter themselves behind their license to fire at us their ruthless platitudes. If such could only struggle against that strong temptation of our fallen nature—the delight of hearing one's own sweet voice—so as to concentrate now and then. The best orators, spiritual and mundane have been brief sometimes.—GUY LIVINGSTONE.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE PREVAILING ERRORS
REGARDING THE SENSE OF THE TERMS
"PHISOSOPHICAL" AND "MATERIAL."

By Dr. ASHBURNER.

IN the Report of the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the London Mesmeric Infirmary, at pages 8 and 9, occurs this passage: "None but mesmerists, not metaphysicians nor medical men in general, nor those who are professed physiologists, have much conception of the influence of the mind upon the body,—or in strict philosophic language, of the brain, as the mental organ, upon the other organs, and the body at large. In some persons, not only can effects be produced by impressions, of which there is a consciousness, but also some of which there is no consciousness. The *Zoist* contains in its abundance of invaluable matter, numerous instances of this. Persons during sleep-waking, who when awake know nothing which has occurred in it, will make promises to do or to refrain from doing certain things, and to experience certain corporeal and mental feelings, at certain times, perhaps very distant, and these promises shall be fulfilled in the waking state, they themselves wondering at, and puzzled to account for the circumstances. In the 11th number of the *Zoist*, article II., are very striking facts of this kind, deserving the study of everybody. These effects take place far more readily in mesmeric patients, or in those susceptible of mesmeric influence, than in others, and the impressions are made most readily in their mesmeric state. There are many marvellous mental and physiological phenomena known to few but those who have studied mesmerism."

It is strange that those who fancy themselves philosophers should be so apt to blunder on somewhat obvious truths. The passage just quoted from a report presumed to be sanctioned by a council on the list of which appear names not of obscure, but of well-known persons, is so unworthy of the body whence it emanates, that but for the habitual confusion which characterises the works of all who advocate the doctrine of matter being of itself endowed with the power of acting, we should be inclined to attribute the authorship to one whose strong prejudices overpower his sense of truth. Apt as we are to respect industry, and a love of science, we must not allow the cause of mesmerism to suffer from those who adhere *per fas et nefas* to the conclusions of an erroneous course of thought.

The passage we have quoted contains some propositions so true, that we the more lament the confusion in the main assertion that the influence of the brain and of the mind upon the body must, in strict philosophic language, be the same. If

this be not the meaning of the passage, there is only one further conclusion at which we readers must arrive—that is, that the brain, as the organ of the mind, exerts an influence upon the body more powerful than the mind itself. This is a proposition so very objectionable, that we must be excused for our anxiety to disclaim any share of the merit of approving of it. Those who are governors and supporters of the Mesmeric Infirmary are not bound to allow their names to be published as approvers of all the arguments in favour of atheistic doctrines which the council publish as documents authorised by all the subscribers. We shall, however, take leave to enlarge upon the theme of our whole quotation; partly because we are bound to praise the editor of the *Zoist* for fair industry, and for the courage displayed in continuing the journal through all the obloquy and all the unfair and unjust persecution he was obliged to suffer, in a cause which he very properly called one of holiness.

Having in this publication advocated the doctrine that mesmerism is the foundation of Spiritualism, we cannot allow so important a fallacy as we have indicated, to pass without observation. We may say, then, that mesmerism leads us to the knowledge of spiritual phenomena, and that if it had been studied in this point of view when, in 1853, it was proposed to its editor to throw open the pages of the *Zoist* to full, free, and fair discussion, the cause of mesmerism would be now as far advanced, as it has been retarded by the refusal, and by the unphilosophical course adopted on the question of its higher developments. It cannot be pretended that any one who held the reasoning powers of the readers of the *Zoist* so very cheap, had, in the papers on the physical phenomena of spiritual manifestations, the slightest idea that he was insulting their common sense by what he put forth. Time, which is a great test of our powers, has placed the matter beyond a doubt. No one would now be found to jeer, as the writer in the *Zoist* was accustomed to do, at the power of the toes to frame replies to questions propounded in the stillness of silent thought. He who would now venture to put forward such assertions as those which appeared in the dying throes of the *Zoist*, would obtain far more contempt than had then reached the knowledge of its editor. He did his best to crush the nascent truth, when poor Major Buckley was able to show him phenomena which he refused to accept as facts. Satisfied for a time that the two girls he came to my house to see were not impostors, he signed a declaration that he had witnessed the fact of mottoes being read which were enclosed in nutshells; and thus he had solemnly recorded his testimony as to the verity of Major Buckley's repeated assertions. I make no comment on his returning to my house four hours afterwards to reclaim

his signed certificate, nor upon his conduct in the course of that evening at the College of Physicians, where he denied the facts; little aware that the same facts were witnessed by the present Earl of Dunraven; Mr. Moncrief Arnott—the distinguished surgeon; Mr. and Mrs. Gutch; and several other persons. Mesmerism, without clairvoyance, he asserted was a truth; while clairvoyance (equally a truth to minds as clear as his own) was fit only for the credulous.

We are sufficiently alive to the many considerations presenting themselves to us, while we reflect on the facts reported to the subscribers of the Mesmeric Infirmary. In spite of the efforts of the council to follow the dicta of their leader, mesmerism pours out many undeniable truths that sternly refuse to be hidden. The report tells us that patients go to sleep; that in their sleep they predict future events—nay, that these events come to pass at the very time predicted; that, with astonishing accuracy, they are noted for occurrence, not only at the minute, but at the second predicted. The editor, however, suggested doubts on as clear a case as any in his Report, when in my absence from town he attended Sarah Noyes, who afforded him a precisely similar case of spiritual prevision. We feel grieved at the want of philosophy which can in the face of such facts reiterate the proposition, that brain is superior to mental power; that brain is mental power; and that, consequently, matter is more mental than our intelligent minds, or than the intelligence of unseen spirits. Strange that men should be found to advocate materialism under the guise of philosophy, while they adduce powerful facts that contravene their own assertions. We defy the council of the Mesmeric Infirmary to produce a single phenomenon in proof of the dogma that the thought-producing power of the material brain is a more philosophical belief than the proposition diametrically opposed to it, *viz.*, that the material brain is regulated by forces which are obedient to the human soul.

Shew me the human soul! rejoins the materialist. Shew me the magnetic force of universal gravitation! I may reply. Shew me the forces productive of chemical affinity! Shew me the delicate aspirations of the mother in her silent prayers for her beloved infant! Shew me the poet's thoughts while he is arranging a magnificent poem! Shew me the unwritten truths at which the close and correctly-thinking philosopher is arriving! but do not ask me to believe in the dogma of thinking brain and of self-active matter.

We will mention the application of certain forces emanating from the chemical decomposition of fluids and metals, in reality a magnet, which we call a voltaic battery, and capable of sustaining a heavy weight attached to the electro-magnet. Would

the council of the Mesmeric Infirmary insist on its being philosophical to say that the weight was sustained, not by electromagnetic force, but by the thinking and powerful block of iron that constitute the electro magnet? Inert matter does not regulate forces, but forces regulate inert matter.

We must not be led away to adopt ideas that are at variance with the received views of physical science. We know what is meant by weight. We know that it is neither more nor less than the influence of the attractive force of gravitation inducing matter to tend towards the centre of the earth. If, therefore, a magnetic force overcomes this powerful tendency, which we call weight, it is clear that the matter which before was under one influence, is now operated on by another. What shall we say to the organs of the brain, which we know vary so much in energy, in different individuals. Can we say that we do not accept the proposition that we are the creatures of circumstances. We need fear no accusation of being fatalists. All men, in a sense, are fatalists, for all men acknowledge themselves to be bound by a powerful destiny. But we are by no means sure that our destiny is not in our own hands. That must depend on the exercise of our power of self-control. If we cannot learn the noble art of self-control, our destiny is assuredly not in our own hands; for we are not our own masters. But who are our masters? This is the question which Dr. Elliotson and those of his school believe we cannot answer. They refuse to study the higher developments of mesmerism. They think they are warranted in stating most extraordinary facts, and when they are called upon to account for those facts, they shrink from the only solution which the subject affords. The same man cannot claim to be a pioneer in the ranks, and at the same time a general in command. The pioneer is a very necessary as well as useful soldier, but he is not necessarily endowed with the intellect of the general. I believe Dr. Elliotson has fulfilled his object. He has amassed a great number of valuable facts; but he has not yet carried his ideas beyond an accumulation of materials, and he sometimes opposes obstacles to the labours of those who would utilize his facts. Chenevix taught him that diseases were cured by mesmerism, and he was captivated by Chenevix. He had oiled the machinery which was to thrash out the grain, and the machine has been thrashing away ever since. But he was severely disappointed that the public would not follow him when he fancied that mesmerism was the road to high practical art. He never had any notion of reducing medicine to a science. He was opposed to Dr. Leger's discoveries. He was never cordial on the subject of the Baron von Reichenbach's great advance in that science he had himself taken up as a practical enquiry. He

thought of crystals only as a means of putting people to sleep. When Mr. Rutter made one of the most important discoveries of his age, we were delighted in foreseeing the amazing results which must follow, upon the establishment of the fact that man was at the head of the infinite series of magnets. We were fortunate in inducing Dr. Leger to view the subject in the same point of view; but when the genius of that man led him to apply Rutter's discovery, to the science of phrenology, we immediately recognized the vast importance of the application of mathematical science, to the philosophy of the human mind. These steps in progress were strides. It was worth while to suffer martyrdom, when such were the results of a self-sacrifice. I cannot regret one act of my past life in connexion with the march of animal magnetism. I have never faltered. I have marched directly to my point.

Our observations on the terms philosophical and material are, then, by no means confined to the Report of the Council of the Mesmeric Infirmary. They relate to all the consequences of following the mistaken idea, that our brains oblige us to act according to our configuration of organs. We may yield to cunning, covetousness, and love of self. We may hold it to be philosophical, to think that our propensities result from our organs, and that we have no power to control their force. This is the real stumbling-block of the materialist. We must not allow the word philosophy to be so libelled. From its derivation it signifies a love of wisdom. It is not wise, to be aberrant from truth. It is not true that it is out of our power to control ourselves. We must allow that when the habit of self-control has been arrived at, we are not only able to lay aside our propensities, but to improve our moral faculties; we are not only bound to become wiser, but less covetous, less selfish, and less disposed to wish harm to those who have despitely entreated us. Thus, philosophy is the opposite pole to materialism, and we should be inclined to call the attention of the Council of the Mesmeric Infirmary to these observations, in order that they and their supporters may reflect on the noble tendencies of a science, the curative powers of which are so greatly enhanced by the holy aspirations and spiritual forces of the magnetizer, and which assist the operation of the will in those thaumaturgic cures, which have too seldom taken place at the Infirmary. Wonders may attract for a time, and the increasing subscribers to the institution may temporarily gladden the heart of my friend, Dr. Elliotson; but if he does not wish for the Mesmeric Infirmary the languishing fate of the *Zoist*, he must not mis-name philosophy; he must become a real lover of wisdom, controlling himself, and leading his followers to take advantage of the spiritual phenomena which mesmerism may present to their notice.

IS IT POSSIBLE?

By Dr. COLLYER.

THE Great Spirit of the Universe—the God of Nature—regulates all things in conformity to positive laws. The pen of science and experience has revealed and will continue to reveal the mysteries of Creation. The history of the world, from the moment of its birth, has been but the development of fixed principles in unison with original design.

To battle with theories or with mere speculation is a loss of time and a fruitless purpose, for man really comprehends nothing of finite causes; he merely appreciates *effects*, and even these are generally submitted to the ordeal of some cherished dogmas as to what constitutes a law of nature. When, however, the philosopher, whose mind is freed from the despotic power of conventional schools, is emboldened by what he has learned of the natural world, and dares to soar beyond the visible and the known, into the regions of the undefined and ideal, he is in fear of degrading his favourite philosophy by the fictions of his fancy, and fettering the simple truths of nature with the false creations of superstition. There is an easy descent from the noblest aspirations of reason and discovery, to the lowest and most benighted forms of visionary speculation; from the sublimest deductions of science, to the wild delirium of the madman. Hence it is, that when men of science, in their investigations after the unknown, discover that all things, sensible and material, bear a hidden relation to the *immortal world*, (on the very threshold of which all philosophical research stops,) and desire to penetrate this new sphere—they are in danger of being classed with the votaries of mystery and fable—of summoning to their aid machinery which sound philosophy disdains, and science indignantly rejects. Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, Franklin, Harvey, Jenner, and a host of other brilliant minds, have had to contend with a bigoted, dogged opposition, not from the ignorant and common people, but from the recognized apostles of science and learning. The class from whom every protection and encouragement should be expected, contains within it those who are the most unrelenting opponents to the reception of new revelations. It is, perhaps, well that it should be so. If it were not so intended by the Creator, it certainly would be otherwise. These men are conservators of truth; for what matters the recognition of a glorious revelation by one generation? If we were possessed of infinite knowledge, the conditions for the development of all the phenomena of nature would be at our command, and we could at all times produce uniform results,

even in the production of the highest phenomena of psychology, of which now only a faint shadowy knowledge has been vouchsafed to us. In material science—that which can be demonstrated mathematically—we are obliged to recognize certain facts, which few, if any, can conceive an idea of, or picture to the mind.

Professor Ehrenberg, of Berlin, found that the silicious stone, known as tripoli, was composed of millions of the remains of organic beings. This stone, when examined by a powerful microscope, was found to be made up entirely of these minute relics, so small that, in a cubic inch, there were forty-one thousand millions of individual existences! In a single grain were contained one hundred and eighty-seven millions! What imagination can grasp such a world of matter as this, which could lay on the point of the pen with which I write? Had we powers adequate to the task of perceiving them, these very specks of creation might be found to be worlds—in relation to others a million times more minute. Sir William Herschel, by observing the disturbances of Saturn, was led to the discovery of the planet Uranus, eight hundred millions miles beyond it; and this remote planet, which has doubled the diameter of the solar system, in its turn, by its disturbances, led Leverrier to predict the discovery of another world two thousand four hundred and eighty-four millions of miles from the sun, having a revolution of one hundred and sixty four years. Who is prepared to say that these are the confines of our system? The animaculæ, three thousand of which only produce a discernible point—or the world, near two hundred and fifty millions of miles in space, are both equally difficult to the mind to grasp:—both are absolute myths to the great majority of the uneducated, who are incapable of corroborating or falsifying the truth or error with regard to these discoveries. Though entirely beyond the ken of the great multitude, no one pretends to doubt their existence, or to dispute the facts. They are here brought forward in antithesis to show how limited, even in material creation, is our vaunted knowledge. Should then a similar limitation of knowledge and similar mysteries in relation to the spiritual creation surprise us? Or, should this consideration deter us from entering upon psychical any more than it does from entering upon physical investigations? Should we not, at least, endeavour to learn all that can be known of our relations to both the material and the spiritual universe?

SPIRITUALISM IN TURKEY.

IN nearly every part of the globe, spiritual phenomena are the subject of experiment and investigation. We condense a letter contained in the last number of the *Revue Spiritualiste*, of Paris, so ably edited by Monsieur Pierart:—

“Constantinople, May 1, 1861.

“Our experiments became daily more interesting. We hold several *séances* weekly, sometimes at one's house, sometimes at another's. Every day new believers are made. Tables rise into the air, and the spirits begin to raise persons. Our most remarkable mediums are two young ladies, whom the spirits magnetize direct, and through them they play at the piano—duets sometimes—the music being of wonderful harmony. Then we have trances, visions, and self-magnetizations, the subjects themselves knowing nothing of magnetic science. We cannot make known the subject so much as we would, for these young ladies are in a profession which brings them under the influence of the clergy; and the priests among us, as elsewhere, are inimical to Spiritualism.

“Some of us, from table mediums, have become writing mediums. I am one of these; and, under spiritual influence, I play music: I being ignorant of even the notes in my ordinary state. I enclose you a piece recently composed through me. The spirits call the air the ‘Song to Eternal Love.’*

“One of the spirits of our circle names herself Sophia. At our request she, through my hand, (though naturally I know not a line of drawing) has executed her portrait. It is a fine head, and is admired by all, meeting every requirement of artists to whom it has been shewn. It has been lithographed by our friend Montani. He is also a medium of the highest order. The spirit Sophia has thanked him for his execution of his part of the work. At the first opportunity I shall send you a few copies of the portrait so produced.

“To tell you what we have obtained in writing is not possible in a letter. I must content myself with informing you that Sophia is writing *The Theory of Spirits*, a magnificent work which she commenced a year ago. Other scientific treatises are in course of composition—*The Harmony of Colours*, *Musical Harmony*, &c. All intended to form a compact whole, and showing the direct relation of Spiritualism to external things, and through it an ultimate resolution into universal harmony.

“A spirit of our circle who is named Angelica, and who is

* The piece of music thus forwarded is beautiful in the opinion of connoisseurs to whom we have shown it.—Z. B. PIERART.

recognized by the other spirits as the head of the spiritual manifestations with us, always addresses us in verse. She has dictated an Ode to Garibaldi. We forwarded it to him three weeks ago : since then she has dictated the words and music of a Hymn to Garibaldi.

" This spirit spoke prophetically in June, 1860, of Garibaldi in connection with the events of Italy. Three fourths of the prediction are already fulfilled. I must send a copy of that *séance*.

" B. REPOS, JUN."

M. JOBARD ON SPIRITUALISM.

M. JOBARD, the director of the *Musée de l'Industrie*, at Brussels, is a well-known advocate of mesmerism. He has lately addressed a long letter to his friend Lafontaine, the celebrated mesmerist of Geneva, who has not yet crossed the threshold of mesmerism, upon the subject of Spiritualism, to which M. Jobard has given much study. From his discursive letter, published in the *Revue Spiritualiste*, we select the following passages, which we think may be interesting to our readers, as showing how the subject is viewed elsewhere. M. Jobard claims a spiritual origin for his theory :—

Spirits escaped from their grosser envelope—the body—retain their *perispirit* (A finer envelope of the spirit, from *peri*, around, and *spiritus*, spirit), as nuts, stripped of husk and shell, retain their *pericardium*. Now this corresponding finer envelope of the spirit is semi-material ; it is ordinarily invisible and transparent ; like the film of a gas bubble, it is visible or invisible according to external conditions and the perceiving power of the observer. Take a balloon as a figure to render the comparison more obvious. You know that as the hydrogen is purer, and its envelope lighter, the higher will it rise in the atmosphere ; it would even clear it if the envelope weighed nothing, and if it were as infinitely extensible as the gas is infinitely expansible. Take, in this comparison, the gas as the spirit, but still endowed with every sense which characterised it when in its grosser envelope of earth.

Spirits take in space the place which they *must* take according to the specific gravity of their *perispirit* ; the heaviest, the most material, cannot rise from the earth : others rise, according to their degree of purity, to higher spheres. Those who have devoted themselves to their iron safes, their equipages, their luxurious abodes, &c., not being able to loosen their hold, are tormented at seeing them held and enjoyed by others ; while they, on the other hand, who have passed their lives in seeking to do good to others, in detaching themselves from material excitements—those, in fine, who have worthily passed their time of trial, who have well fulfilled their mission, joyfully quit the earth to rise towards better worlds ; taking with them their moral, intellectual, and spiritual acquisitions—the only ones they can take, and of which death cannot deprive them.

Think of the number of ignorant and wicked spirits, accumulated from the beginning, immediately around our globe : this crowd can infuse into us only their own stupid or unhealthy ideas : they abound in the low quarters of great cities, filling their vile resorts, their abodes of vice—truly *inferior* or *infernal* places, where body and soul are alike endangered : there they cluster around us, and would make us as bad as themselves.

There are houses where crimes have been perpetrated: in these places the spirits of the offenders are often condemned to remain until they have expiated their offences. Such spirits, sometimes feel a malignant pleasure in plaguing the residents; they will deteriorate their minds with evil thoughts, and will tempt and instigate them to evil deeds like their own.

Sometimes among the persons inhabiting a place thus haunted, there may be a medium of physical influence, these spirits then exhibit a power of manifesting their presence materially, or, they perform physical acts; tables rock, blows are struck, things are thrown, and damage is done, the perpetrators of which the police look for in vain. The departure of the medium is followed by a cessation of such demonstrations.

In perforating ancient Lutetia with new and spacious streets, we know not what spiritual cleansing the Emperor may have been the means of effecting. Without this, Paris would have become more and more the resort of crowds of these earth-bound and evil-doing spirits, and would have sunk as great cities of old have before, through the perversion, by their influence, of the moral sense of its population.

There have been crises in the history of the human race; and to me there are signs of an approaching one. Thus, we see the Czar of Russia enfranchising its forty millions of serfs; the American Republic taking a course which ~~will~~ end in the freedom of its four millions of negroes; the Bey of Tunis giving his subjects a liberal constitution; and the Pope becoming enlightened to the danger of the mixture of temporal with spiritual government. Such, and many others, are signs of the action of good spirits upon the human mind.

If in Edenic and patriarchal times men enjoyed tranquillity of soul and length of days, it was, in part at least, because the spirit population was sparse, while in these latter times of mental trouble and shortened earthly existence, it is so numerous that were their *perispirit* opaque, the very light of the sun would be hidden from us.

It seems, my dear Lafontaine, that you are at present content with the explanations of those elementary schools called *Academies*, imperial or royal; for my part, I think all our sciences, like our institutions, have to be reconstructed; and I hope I shall soon be in some higher sphere, whence I may see you taking part in this work of reconstruction. If you then feel inclined from the heart to do so, you may be able to call me to give you information from the strange world of which I have just given you a slight ethnographic outline.

Notices of Books.

Mysteries of Life, Death and Futurity. Illustrated from the best and latest Authorities. By HORACE WELBY. London: Kent and Co.

THE design of this book is thus stated in the Preface:—"It has been undertaken with the view of concentrating within its focus the views and opinions of some of the leading writers of the present day, and placing them before the reader in so popular a form and setting as to adapt them for a larger class than would be likely to consult the authorities themselves whence the substance of this volume has been derived. Facts, anecdotes, personal traits of character, and well-grounded arguments and opinions, are the staple of the work; and special care being taken to give each statement its mint-mark of its authority."

This design is worked out, not in a continued treatise, but in series of short suggestive extracts, under such general divisions as "Life and Time," "Nature of the Soul," "Spiritual Life," "Mental Operations," "Belief and Scepticism," "Man after Death," "The Future States," &c. Under these general divisions there are extracts on such special topics as "What is Life?" "Unity of the Human Race." "The Development Theory." "Plurality of Worlds." "Spiritual Life." "Materialism and Spiritualism." "Personal Identity." "Mesmerism

and Somnambulism." "Clairvoyance." "Mind and Body." "What is Revelation." "Special Providences." "True Course of Christian Life." &c.

These are but a few of the many subjects treated of in this volume. The citation of these heads will perhaps give a better idea of its character than would be conveyed by quotation from a work of such multifarious contents. It presents in a compendious form some results of an extensive and varied reading on subjects of universal interest. It has a quaint curious frontispiece, representing the seven ages of man, from a block print of the fifteenth century, in the British Museum.

Correspondence.

SOME NEW RAPPINGS.

A RECENT number of the *Sussex Advertiser* contained the following paragraph, headed

FLETCHING.

EXTRAORDINARY AFFAIR.—The quiet and peaceful little village of Fletching has been, since Saturday, May 11th, kept in a state of great excitement by the report that in the house of Mr. Alfred Wood, a respectable shoemaker, residing opposite the church, there had been heard strange sounds, said to be "spirit rappings," by which the inmates were thrown into a state of alarm. The mysterious sounds were first heard on the evening just named, about nine o'clock, and they continued to be repeated in quick succession, at intervals, until eleven, when all resumed its wonted quiet. A renewal of these singular sounds was heard on Sunday evening, commencing and terminating about the same time as the previous night, and on each succeeding night during the week, they were to be heard with the same regularity. The neighbours were made acquainted with the circumstances, and drawn by curiosity to the house, they there received abundant proof that they had not been mis-informed; for not only those who gained admission to the house, but those who had congregated in the street, could also distinctly hear the strange sounds. A minute investigation of the cause was made, both in and around the house, every facility for this being given, by Mr. Wood, to all parts of the house, but without success. An intelligent police constable made an inspection of the premises, but it baffled the ingenuity of that astute official to discover whence the sounds proceeded. Even the much esteemed and highly-respected vicar did not consider it unbecoming his sacred calling to enquire into the cause of this extraordinary phenomenon, but, like the limb of the law, he failed to ascertain the why and the wherefore. Several of the floor-boards were taken up as the sound seemed to proceed from the wall close to the bedroom floor, but without any satisfactory result. Various are the reports and conjectures concerning the affair, and, as might be supposed, vague superstitions are entertained respecting it by the more ignorant rustics. There is, doubtless, some trickery in the affair, and it is trusted that, before long, some satisfactory explanation of it may be obtained.

One of our contributors, wishing to know more about the matter, wrote to Mr. Wood, and has received from him the following letter, which we have permission to publish:—

Fletching, Sussex, May 31.

Sir—In answer to yours respecting the rappings in my house, I should and did feel pleasure in any respectable persons coming in to hear it. From the 11th to the 21st inst., it was constant. People came miles to hear it, and seemed convinced it was no deception; but now we scarcely hear it more than seven or eight times during the evening—three evenings since the 11th not at all. From the 11th to the 14th the rapping began at about nine o'clock and continued until about eleven o'clock, hard enough to shake the middle wall of the house, which is bricks—

nine inches; also the contents of the cupboard, pots, glasses, &c. When we are upstairs, the boards shake under our feet. I did, from the 11th to the 21st, open my house to any one that liked to walk in. I should think, on the 14th, there were not less than 100 persons heard it, outdoors as well as in. Now there are many false reports about it—some say it is the inmates of the house; but I can positively declare that we are all innocent; as the policeman, myself, and two or three others have kept a strict watch over them. I wish it would still continue that it might be found out, or it will always remain a mystery. I should not like you to come, as you might be disappointed in hearing it. If it should come again and continue, I will write to you.

I am, sir, yours, &c.,

ALFRED WOOD

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—Since forwarding you the remarkable case of 'Clairvoyance related in "Traits of Character," I have obtained the 2nd vol. of that work, in which the following narration occurs

I remain, sir, yours faithfully,

May 16th.

J. FAWCETT.

'In this sketch'—Tyrone Power—'I have alluded more than once to three pretty sisters. They ranged from fifteen to eighteen. The youngest, Helen, was the loveliest. She went to India, made what is called a *spancé* match—marrying the eldest son of a wealthy English baronet, and died in less than three months after her bridal. There was something very remarkable about this dear girl. She was a somnambulist, a "dreamer of dreams," and possessed besides, what one in the family even, the father, asserted was endowed with the power of "second sight." In this, as in every kind of superstition, they all believed implicitly; but the father and Helen were the most conspicuous in this respect. That she was a somnambulist, I know, as I have seen her under its influence. She had the sweetest voice in speaking I ever listened to, and also in singing. One Scotch song—"I am wearin' awa' to the land of the leal" she used to sing with such exquisite pathos that she was obliged to give up singing it in society, as it always produced such an outburst of weeping and wailing in her auditors. I have frequently seen her fast asleep, seated by the side of the bed, with her fingers moving in rapid succession as if playing on a piano, and warbling in tones of the most thrilling mournfulness and sweetness this her favourite song. *Amina*, in the opera of "Somnambula," always came in mind of poor Helen. Whether really she had the power of "second sight" I cannot tell, but that she was a "dreamer of dreams" I can vouch. She was staying with me, and we were occupants of the same chamber. One night she was suddenly aroused from sleep by her violent shrieks. I enquired the cause and she told me "she had dreamt she had seen Mr. —" (a gentleman with whom her family was very intimate) "shoot himself." The gentleman alluded to had, with his wife, a few weeks previous, set off for the German baths. I tried to soothe and tranquillize her as much as I could, and begged of her to go to sleep again and endeavour to dream of something pleasanter. She went to sleep, but in an hour or so the screams again awoke me, and she explained that she had been visited a second time with the same horrible dream, and she had vividly seen Mr. — shoot himself, and that the details of such a catastrophe were minutely embodied before her. As she appeared very much agitated, and as the day was beginning to dawn, I proposed we should get up and take a ramble in the garden, where the balmy flowers and the carolling birds made us soon forget Helen's dismal dream. The next day the servant brought up a card, bearing on it the name of a lady whom I had certainly heard of, but with whom I had no personal acquaintanceship. Helen was with me when she entered the room. "Can I speak with you alone?" were her first words. Helen withdrew. "Was not that young lady one of the Miss —?" my visitor enquired. I answered: "Have you heard anything from Mr. and Mrs. — since they went to Germany?" I answered that I had not. Neither had Helen's father, the bosom friend of

— I was about to tell her of Helen's dream, when I noticed she held in her hand a letter with a broad black edge to it, and that there was that rigidity and sadness in her manner which the bearer of evil tidings ordinarily assumes. She then narrated that the sister of Mrs. —, who was connected by marriage with her husband, had written to him that morning announcing that her brother-in-law—whom, with his wife, she had only lately joined, intending to make a tour of the German baths—had shot himself. It appeared he had, like many a one, indulged in the fatal passion for gambling, and that at that time was so marked a characteristic of the watering-places in Germany,—contracted debts of "honour," which he was totally unable to meet, and overcome by despair, did what, alas! before and since, others have done through the same criminal cause—put a pistol to his head, and shot himself. This remarkable verification of Helen's dream of the preceding night astonished her visitor when I narrated it, as much as it did myself. What made it even more singular was, that it was in a wood, or grove, where the unhappy man committed the fearful deed; and this was precisely in accordance with Helen's description, as she spoke of the large trees she had seen on the spot; and had been a personal witness of the tragedy, she could not more minutely have detailed the accessories surrounding it. The lady had called on me to break the awful news to Mr. —, Helen's father, as gently as I could.

There was yet another instance in her brief life, which came within my own knowledge, of her possessing some mysterious prophetic faculty. One of the endearing superstitions of the family, handed down from generation to generation, was that the knowledge of the death of any member of it was always communicated in a whisper, at the period of its occurrence, to one special individual belonging to it. It was supposed that Helen, to whom her father and sisters very much believed "coming events cast their shadows before them," would be the recipient of these unseen revelations. But no deaths had occurred to test the accuracy of the surmise. There was a son in the family, a dissolute and graceless youth, whose evil nature and disreputable conduct had tended greatly, it was believed, to accelerate his mother's death, and whose name was a "sealed book," never to be spoken by any. He had fled the country, having, if not exactly, violated its laws, gone so dangerously near to doing so, that exclusion from society was the consequence. Where he was they knew not—I believe cared not to utter he had his profligacy obliterated and destroyed all natural affection; whether he even existed they took no trouble to ascertain. One day Power, Helen, her sisters, and some other ladies, and myself, were walking in, as now, that loveliest of our Metropolitan rambling places, Kensington Gardens. The weather was very warm, and as she complained of suffering from headache, I proposed that we, who felt tired, should rest awhile, whilst Power and the rest of the party proceeded on their promenade. We entered one of those wooden recesses which are such a nice shelter from the heat, and afford to weary the opportunity of sitting down. Doubly acceptable were they at that time, when the advent of 'chairs' had not dawned. We were highly amused watching the pedestrians and equestrians, commenting on the dresses of the ladies—ever such a dear delight to young girls or old women—when suddenly I saw Helen start, tremble convulsively, and every tint of colour recede from her cheek, leaving it of an unearthly paleness: while from her blue lustrous eyes large tears fell thickly, though silently. 'Are you ill, Helen?' I anxiously inquired. 'My brother is dead—it has just been told me—I have heard the death-whisper.' I certainly never saw so strange and unnatural an expression

on any face as was stamped on hers while repeating the words 'My brother is dead!' As she had complained all the morning of her head aching, and as she was a most excitable imaginative girl, I thought the supernatural telegraph she seemed to have heard was but the vision of a heated brain. Of course we turned home immediately. Her father was informed of what had occurred, and giving implicit credence to her statement, caused inquiries to be instituted about that 'prodigal son,' so long an alien and outcast. It was several months before any definite information was received, as there was great difficulty in tracing him through the *Bohemian* career he had followed. But at last it was ascertained he had gone to Australia, and died at Sydney on the very day, and at the

specific hour, the 'death whisper' was heard by Helen in Kensington Gardens. I pretend not to give any explanation of the circumstance—I only narrate what occurred under my own cognizance."

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—I appreciate the candid remarks of Dr. Coleman, and I am glad that his note has been published, as I think that the difficulty to which he has alluded, and to which you have replied, has discomposed many well-meaning minds. A similar apprehension has prevented some persons from making any examination into the philosophy of spiritual phenomena, and thus it has deterred profitable gleaners from even entering the sunny corn-fields of Spiritualism. Your comments entirely agree with my own ideas upon the subject of spiritual intercourse, so far as my knowledge has extended. With respect to minds having a natural bias towards materiality,—a quality certainly not more applicable to medical men than to people in general, including lawyers, literati, or even divines, the grand fact for establishment is simply whether any spiritual influence does exist, irrespective of its nature or degree of perfection, good or evil, and as you have remarked, "spiritual communion" remains in either case as a fact, clear and indisputable. It has been contended that all crystal revelations may be depended upon on account of the particular form of invocation adopted, and wherein the Divine character of the Saviour is recognised. I am not prepared to assert or to deny that such is the case when the crystal has been duly consecrated, and the invocation properly and reverently made after the custom of ancient seers; but I have known cases where true statements have been thus given irrespective of any preparatory charge or prayer, at least with respect to worldly affairs. In the several cases of spirit writings which occurred to myself, *Spiritual Magazine*, vol. 1, p. 430-1, the influences apparently represented persons who, when living, were pious and moral; yet, except in one case, no word was mentioned respecting the Deity, nor was the name of the Saviour mentioned, although in all the cases there seemed to be the existence of bliss and an acknowledgment of a higher power controlling the influence.

From one, deceased some years before, it was written: "As progression is gradual, so we come to you; were we permitted to unfold to you or to mortals generally the beauties that continually surround us, you would become disgusted with life in the form, and you would not be willing to remain the time God has allotted. Therefore, be patient, and you will yet know more of spirit-laws and regulations."

In another case, reference was made to "our beautiful home," in the spiritual sense. This idea of progression in the spirit-world is in accordance with the experiences of Judge Edmonds, and of others, being perhaps, in the opinion of some persons, more consistent with divine justice than the commonly received opinion still in vogue amongst able and learned theologians and secularists,—of an eternity of posthumous felicity or of woe.

In reply to a question, the spirit of Bacon stated to the Judge, that it had not seen Christ, and it described eloquently why such vision had not occurred—namely, because the spirit had not progressed sufficiently, but it believed that Christ was with God, and that at some future time, the vision would be granted.

Dr. Hare also declared, prior to his decease, that in consequence of his sister, many years deceased, having identified herself so as to convince him that she "lived," and of communications from her and other spirits, he had "believed in revelation through Jesus of Nazareth, and had become a Christian."

Converts have likewise been made, and the truths of Christianity confirmed, by spirit communications in the crystal; and many cases might be cited where persons have believed by means of Spiritualism generally, in spiritual truth and in the Christian religion, which belief respectable and popular sects and creeds had failed to impart.

As a novice in spirit knowledge, I write subject to correction, but it seems to me that some spirits have a vague idea of *time*, as well as of higher intelligences. In the case first quoted above, the querited had only been deceased for some three years, and yet her spirit alluded to having "long since bid adieu" to earth.

Yours faithfully,

CHRISTOPHER COOKE.

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